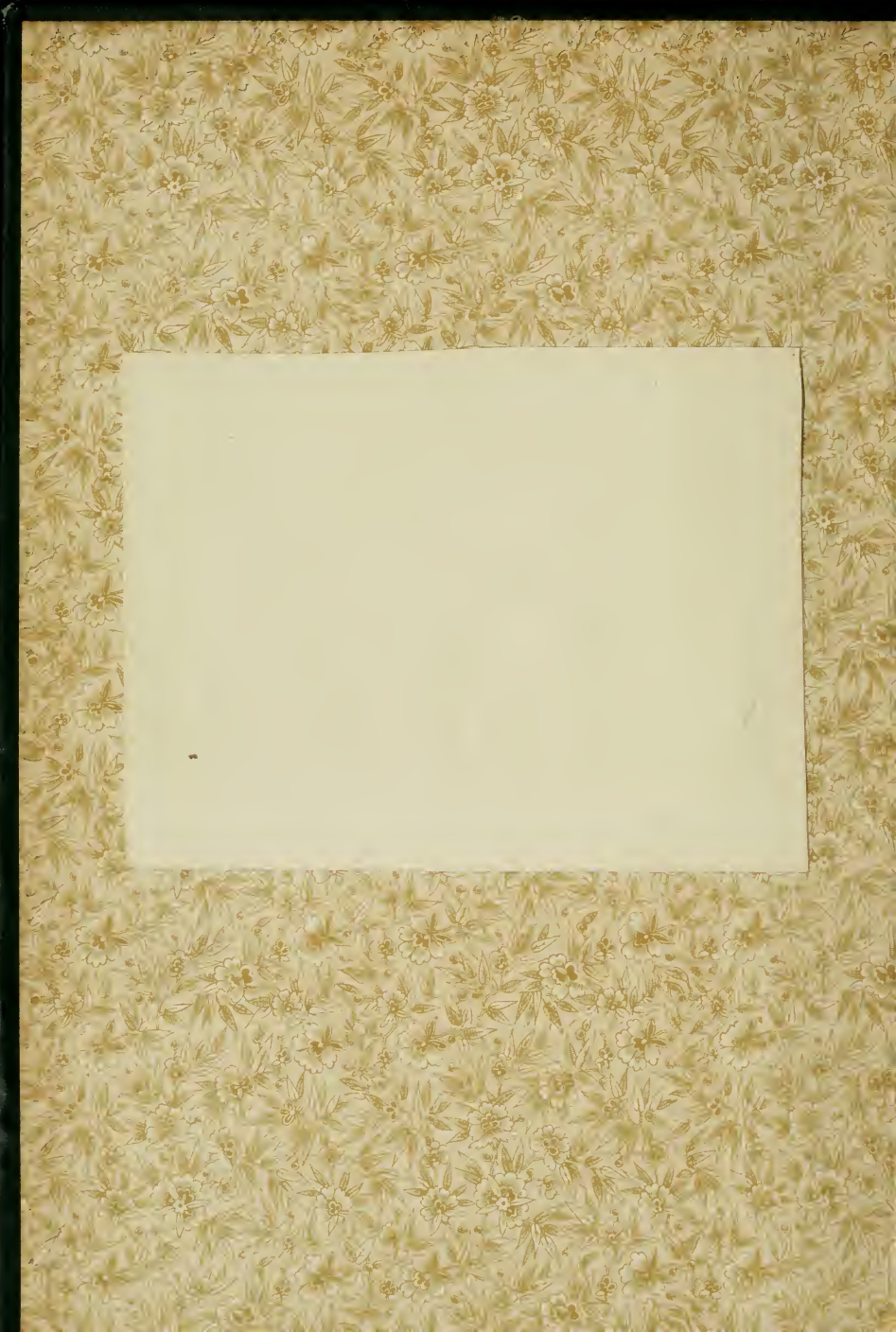


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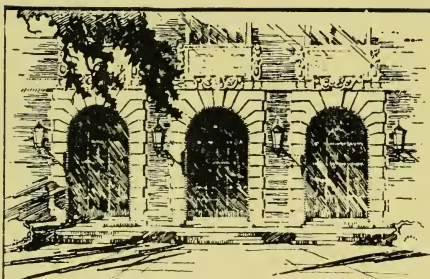
AT THE PARTING
OF THE WAYS



BY CYRIL







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ALETHEA:

AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

Alethea :

AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

BY

CYRIL.

VOL. I.

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A L E T H E A.

CHAPTER I.

ST. SOPHIA—A SCENE ON EPIPHANY DAY,
A.D. 858.

EPIPHANY of the year 858 was a day of mixed emotions in the Christian city of Constantinople. The people of that ancient capital admired and loved the outward pomp of their religion, and they were in joyous mood on that morning, in view of a gorgeous function in St. Sophia; where the Patriarch Ignatius would celebrate the Liturgy, and the ruler of the Empire would attend in state.

The Eastern Celebration is different, in many particulars, from that of the West. Apart from its language, which is Greek, the prayers, outside the consecration form, are not the same as those in the Latin Liturgy; nor are the movements of the Greek priest the same as those of the Latin, while the doors of the Sanctuary remain closed during the greater part of the service.

The vestments used in the Eastern Celebration were, at that time, richer and more ornate than those of the West, and hence the appearance of the vested Oriental presbyter was singularly attractive. The churches of the East were warmer in colouring than those of the West, outside Italy, and of superior architecture; and if, from these

and other causes, the Eastern Celebration was exceptionally beautiful in the middle of the ninth century, nowhere could it be seen to such advantage as in the Cathedral church of Constantinople.

On that Epiphany morning of the year 858 the bells of St. Sophia were ringing at an early hour; and in answer to their summons, the poor and rich of the city were leaving their houses, and pouring on in confluent streams towards that great church, which could give accommodation to many thousands within its walls: and it was pleasant to hear the greeting of friends as they met on the way, in such words as, "God's Mother be with you," or "May she who brought forth God protect you"; to listen to the medley of Eastern languages, to see the graceful draperies of the women, and the stout bearing of the soldiers in their buskins and short tunics, and the pride of the patricians as they passed in richly painted chariots; but, above all, to gaze on a cavalcade, glittering with gold and precious stones, that issued from the Imperial Palace, for of it Bardas, the Cæsar and ruler of the Empire, and a young and fair woman, were the central figures.

Arriving at the church and passing in through its open doors, this great stream of life spread out on every side over the vast area of the building; and after the lapse of a short time, child and elder, freedman and slave, patrician and plebeian, prince and peasant, were standing, sitting, or kneeling, all with eyes fixed on the closed doors of the Sanctuary.

They had not waited long in suspense, when one

of the side doors of this Sanctuary was opened, and a number of clerics, led by a cross-bearer, came forth in processional order, followed by two priests, one of them bearing on his head a basin containing the leavened bread, and the other holding between his hands the chalice of wine intended for the Eucharistic Celebration. As the procession passed them on its way down the nave, the members of the congregation bent their heads before the unconsecrated elements, and not a few asked the Patriarch, as he went by, to remember them in the coming Celebration.

Slowly and solemnly the processionists went down through the church to the end, when turning they retraced their steps, and coming back to the Sanctuary, whence they had gone forth, entered it through the central door, which was closed after them; and then the Liturgical Celebration began inside.

After the lapse of half-an-hour or less, the principal door of the Sanctuary turned again slowly upon its hinges, and the Patriarch came forward to elevate the Consecrated Elements in presence of the congregation. There was breathless silence in the church during this ceremony, and every head was bowed in lowly reverence until the end of it; when the door was closed again, and the Patriarch retired to the altar to continue the Celebration. When he had received the Holy Communion, a master of ceremonies came forth, to put the laity in position to receive the "mystery," giving the first place to the men, and the second, or left side, to the women.

Then Ignatius, accompanied by his deacon, came forward, and holding in his right hand a fragment of the Host, extended it towards the first communicant, saying at the same time: "The Body of Christ." The communicant answered "Amen," and Ignatius put the Consecrated Element into his hand, raised and put forward to receive it. Then the deacon advanced with the chalice, and gave him of its contents. When all who presented themselves had received the Communion under both kinds, the Patriarch, with his attendant, turned away to retire into the Sanctuary.

And now a scene occurred, terrible in its vividness, and without precedent in a Christian temple. The Cæsar rose to his feet, and passing through the line of communicants, haughtily, but without show of irreverence, followed the Patriarch into the Sanctuary, with the purpose of receiving Communion at the altar, which was then the privilege of the Emperor of the East.

Ignatius fixed upon the intruder a look in which severity and compassion were mingled, and putting the sacred vessels reverently on the altar, made a motion to him to retire; and as Bardas passed into the church, he followed him to the beginning of the nave. But suddenly the Cæsar, who had seemed humbled and crest-fallen, uttered a fierce cry, and springing erect, drew from its sheath a glittering sword, which he pointed as if to plunge it into the breast of the Patriarch—when he was stopped by the grasp of a powerful hand on his arm, while the words rang through the church:

"Sheathe your sword, Cæsar! Remember that you are in a place where angels fear to tread."

Bardas turns a withering glance on his assailant, who is a young Turmarch, or captain, of commanding mien and figure, and shouts to him to remove his hand.

"Base rebel, to your standard," he hissed; "hands off, or I will have you strangled or drowned as a traitor."

"You waste your threats on me, Cæsar," said the officer, respectfully but firmly. "They cannot deter me from the double duty of saving this holy place from desecration, and the name you bear from disgrace."

"Seize the caitiff," roared Bardas, turning towards his guards; "bind him, drag him away, and bury him in the deepest prison."

The soldiers did not stir: they were paralysed by the awful scene, and struck with admiration of the young soldier, whose manly beauty, strength, and military bearing, as he stood out under the light of the dome, were made doubly attractive by contrast with the writhing grimaces and fiendish expression of the man he held in his iron grasp. Indeed, they would have remained passive spectators of the encounter, had not Bardas, addressing himself to their commander, vociferated: "If you value your position and your head, Sir, you will order your men to advance and seize this wretch."

The soldiers were beginning to form into line, when a murmur, like the rising of a storm, was heard through the church, gradually gaining strength, till it swelled into a hurricane of protest,

in which the deep voices of the men were mingled with the shrill cries of the women. A tempest of angry remonstrance, passing all bounds of moderation and restraint, broke forth from the excited people; and finally, rising to their feet as if at the word of command, the vast assemblage of many thousands gave vent to their excited feelings in a chorus of loud cries: "Theophylact, champion of morality! Theophylact, defender of religion! Touch not the Turmarch. Away with the Cæsar!"

The guards dared not advance. The Cæsar swelled with overflowing wrath. The officer still held the assassin fast, until coming forth from the Sanctuary, whither he had retired, and raising his hand to bespeak silence, Ignatius advanced to the rail, and fixing his glance upon Bardas Cæsar, said, in a voice rendered doubly solemn by the thrilling scene:

"August one! I have performed what has been to me a painful duty in refusing you the Blessed Sacrament: but the laws of religion left me no alternative. You are a rebel against those laws, living in undisguised profligacy, in a manner almost unknown among the pagans; and as if to show your insensibility to your guilty state, or your contempt for the moral law, you parade at your side the partner of your guilt. You have threatened me with the sword: I threaten you with the thunderbolts of Heaven. Put up your sword within its scabbard: have you not heard that those who take the sword by the sword shall perish?"

Bardas Cæsar uttered not a word in reply to this

solemn admonition, but trembled visibly, as if struck with a sudden pang of fear or remorse. His face lost its colour; his lips quivered; his nerves became relaxed; looking round him with a dazed expression, he put out his free arm as if to grasp some support; the sword dropped from his hand, and he fell heavily to the ground. For some moments he lay still; and then the horrid contortions of face and figure that accompany an epileptic seizure came upon him, and he rolled on the floor a pitiable object, filling all who looked upon him with fear and horror.

His attendants without delay raised him, placed him on a litter, and, throwing a cloth-of-gold coverlet over him, bore him hurriedly away from the church which he had entered with such pomp.

CHAPTER II.

THE EASTERN EMPIRE—TALK IN THE CAPITAL.

THE tragic historical event brought before our readers in the preceding chapter carries us back over a long bridge of more than ten centuries, and leads us into the centre of a great Empire that has long since passed away. It carries us within the walls of a noted city on the shore of the Bosphorus, at the Eastern extremity of Europe, which was, in its day, the capital of the civilised world. And we find ourselves in a great organised State that has been Christian from its foundation—so Christian, indeed, that religion is blended with statecraft, and social intercourse is leavened with theology.

Around us, on every side, are the sentinels of advanced refinement: public monuments that would do honour to the city of Augustus; statuary of a distinct and meritorious type in ivory, bronze, and marble; mosaics of a unique and brilliant character; wall paintings in bold and effective colouring; and books on all subjects, so numerous that, in our day, one collection of them alone was found to be large enough to fill thirty-six folio volumes.

We are led by the scene we have witnessed into the Byzantine or Greek Empire, named also the second Roman Empire, where there is a Court, a Senate, patricians and officials of all ranks, State

departments, an organised army and navy, manufactures, commerce, and provision for higher as well as elementary education.

Over this great Christian, civilised Eastern Empire reigned, in the middle of the ninth century, two sovereigns conjointly. One of them was young; the other of mature years. The younger man was given up to pleasure; the elder man to business. The younger man was Emperor by right of succession; the elder was reigning, by his permission, in his name. There was not much to choose between them in a moral sense; for while the younger man was of intemperate habits, the elder was leading a life of notorious licentiousness. This glorious Empire, with great traditions and mighty aspirations, had then fallen into the hands of the reckless Michael III. and his clever but demoralised uncle, Bardas; and this at a time when it required an exemplary ruler to heal the wounds it had received in the recent conflicts arising out of the Iconoclastic controversy.

When we say that two sovereigns reigned conjointly over the Eastern Empire in the year 858, we must not be understood to imply that they moved on the same lines, or crossed each other's path. For practically only one moved, while the other stood by and looked on; and it was to let his subjects know that Bardas was the active partner that Michael III. gave him authority to assume the title of Cæsar, by which he is known in history.

Bardas Cæsar, though weak in morality, was intellectually one of the strongest men of his age.

He was a ripe scholar, and fond of learning and learned men; moreover, he was not in this connexion either selfish or narrow-minded, but anxious to communicate to others the knowledge he possessed, and to extend to the inhabitants of Constantinople the advantages of superior education. From one cause or another, and notably from the coarseness and carelessness of preceding Emperors, the higher studies of that period had lost their old home in the Imperial city. There was no school of much repute there, and no professor whose lectures were worth attending.

Bardas had money at his disposal; he had a large unused palace that he could call his own; and he found, quite accidentally, in a poor lodging-house of the city, a man named Leo, who was a repertory of all the science of that day, and was prepared to put his learning and incomparable abilities at the service of the public in return for even a slender livelihood.

A philosopher above all, but a poet, astronomer, and grammarian as well, this Leo was in every way qualified to direct an institution in which the higher studies should be taught; and, accordingly, Bardas Cæsar installed him in the Palace of Magnaura, which he divided into classrooms, gymnasiums, and study-halls. With him he associated a staff of teachers, the best he could find in the Empire; and he even put down his own name on the academic roll, as an occasional lecturer on jurisprudence.

Thus equipped, the School of Magnaura became the nucleus of the learning of the Empire, and the

parent of men of science and eminent scholars in that and succeeding ages.

Bardas Cæsar was proud of the school he had founded, proud of its professors, proud of his own abilities, and elated by his success as a reviver of learning. He was proud of his birth, of his high position, and of his ascendancy over his nephew, the Emperor of the East. If he had not been singularly filled with that self-confidence which springs from a haughty spirit, he would not have dared to present himself for Holy Communion in open church, and in presence of the people of Constantinople, to whom he was a daily scandal ; but he seemed to think that he could control the public conscience of a Christian people as he ruled the State, and that the Church would not presume to put a veto on any project he took in hand. But to his surprise and horror, he was suddenly made aware of the fact that he had over-estimated his power. The Patriarch of Constantinople had stood in the way of his profanity ; the sullen murmur of the congregation in St. Sophia had told him that he had passed the limits of decency and toleration ; he had been refused Holy Communion, he had been upbraided as a public transgressor ; he had been struck down by an invisible hand, and had rolled upon the ground, under the feet of the people, in front of the altar that he would have desecrated. What humiliating recollections for the most powerful ruler of his day !

His mind was full of anxious thoughts when he recovered from his fit of epilepsy ; but they did not disturb his outward serenity, or drive him to a life

of seclusion. His iron will seemed to control the situation, for he made no change in the kind or order of his daily occupations. He drove the chariot of State as usual, with a steady hand ; rose early, and spent the morning hours in consultation with his official advisers ; received with affability all persons who called upon him on business ; walked and drove through the streets of the city, and even delivered one of his ponderous lectures on the laws and constitution of the Empire.

Under this calm demeanour a fire was rising in the inmost soul of the ruler, consuming in him all feelings of moderation and mercy, and kindling into a white heat a desire to avenge himself on Ignatius and Theophylact, whom he looked upon as the authors of his humiliation. But here there was need for caution. Ignatius, he knew, had a large following in the city, and Theophylact was the most popular commander in the army.

Long and earnestly he reflected on the situation. He would punish the soldier and the Bishop ; but he would not act rashly. He would first gauge to its depths the public opinion of the city on the scene in St. Sophia ; and, if he should find it consonant with his own views of that incident, he would strike hard and at once ; but if he found that the citizens generally took sides with his enemies, he would still strike, indeed, but cautiously : for nothing should rob him of his revenge. He attached but little importance to the cries of the congregation in the Cathedral, for these, he thought, might be traced to a sudden ebullition of unreasoning excitement.

He sent for a quaint and eccentric hanger-on of the Court, named Andrimades, a man who was in everything and everywhere, who was by nature a babbler and a newsmonger, and who could be an eavesdropper and a spy upon occasion ; and gave him a commission to make flying visits to the forums, basilicas, and places of public amusement, to mingle with high and low, to elicit or overhear their views on the subject that occupied his thoughts, and to return after a few days to the Palace with such information as he should have been able to gather.

Andrimades, full of the importance of the commission he had received from Bardas, started without delay on a promiscuous tour through the city. For many subsequent days he might be seen lounging near the great basilicas, where crowds were always assembled and much conversation was going on, and even stopping short in the street to listen to the remarks of any two persons who might be engaged in earnest conversation.

He came unexpectedly one day on a number of youths who were indulging in lively banter, and laughing loudly at the remarks made by one of their number.

"Such fun," said he, "to see him sprawling, like a kicked dog, on the ground ; blowing and puffing, and in his contortions knocking about the crown that had fallen from his head ! It was better than a play, I tell you. I would rather be looking at him than at a rope dancer in the theatre."

"Serve him right," said a hungry-looking member of the party. "If he ate less he would fare better."

"Don't speak so loud, if you value your head," said a man of malignant expression, in a low voice; "but I hope," he added, "Michael will be the next to get a fall. These fools and madmen are sucking the life-blood out of the State."

Though Andrimades was unable accurately to follow these remarks, he had heard enough to convince him that the envious and the jesters of the city had no other feeling for his patron in his misfortune than contempt; and he turned from these worthies to look for speakers of a better class, among whom other sentiments might be expected to prevail.

He entered the second region of the city, and stopped in front of the "Old Church," near which a bearded monk of mature years and a young priest were conversing; and pretending to examine the mosaics on a fountain that stood by, he came near enough to hear their conversation.

"Was it not providential?" said the priest. "If that officer had not been in the church the Patriarch would certainly have been run through."

"We know not, my young friend," said the monk Basil; "another instrument might have been found to save him, if Theophylact had not intervened. Our good Patriarch is always under the protection of the Theotokos."

"True," said the other, "and she clothed him with brightness on that day; for he never seemed more like an angel of light than when he raised his warning arm over that dark, sinful man."

"You were witness of the awful scene?"

"Yes."

“And saw the Cæsar fall?”

“Yes; struck down, as it appeared to me, mysteriously by an invisible hand.”

“Like the judgment of Peter on Ananias, but tempered with mercy. Ah,” said Basil feelingly, “this Cæsar has escaped for the moment; he should be thankful. Will he, after this warning, change his wretched life, and cease to scandalise the city? If not, I should fear that his fate will be that of the Chaldean king who was weighed in the balance and found wanting.”

“May even he,” said the younger ecclesiastic, “be converted at the eleventh hour!”

Andrimades had heard enough to convince him that among the clergy there was no sympathy for the fallen Cæsar, and resolved to go in the direction of the Senate House, which was not far away, where he ventured to hope he would hear more tolerant and loyal sentiments expressed by the patricians who lingered under its porticoes. In this he was not disappointed: for as he approached the building, he saw Behanes, a senator; Coxus, a patrician; Oriphas, the Admiral; and some other men of rank engaged in an animated conversation; and joining them, he was pleased to hear, for the first time, an all-round condemnation of the conduct of Ignatius in refusing the Eucharistic Communion to Bardas Cæsar.

“I am entirely for discipline,” said Oriphas. “The head of the State should be obeyed, and whatsoever he asks for should be given him.”

“Even if he asked for your head?” said Behanes, laughing.

"The Admiral is right," said Coxus. "How dare a bishop set himself against a man who is more powerful than an emperor? What is a bishop but an official, like Oriphas here? Who made him a bishop but the Emperor, who can unfrock him when he pleases."

"Have you not read in the revealed writing," asked Behanes, "that a priest is a priest for ever? And I suppose a bishop is the same, even if he be driven from his church. Take care of your premisses. An Emperor cannot unmake a bishop. But a bishop ought to find a way of tolerating Court foibles, of conniving at Cæsar's sins. He should take it for granted that when he goes to the church he means well, and has prepared himself for the sacred gift he solicits."

"By the shadow of Olympus, you are wrong," said Andrimades, intervening. "How could Ignatius suppose that he meant well, when he had his precious daughter-in-law at his side? If he had left her at home, he might have passed with the Patriarch as a penitent."

"Andrimades speaks common sense for the first time in his life," said a chorus of voices, "but tell us, great Solomon, what would you have done if you had been in the position of Ignatius?"

"What would I have done? I would have beaten a retreat, and retired to the most remote corner of the Sanctuary, and left Bardas to go as he came, when he should be tired of waiting and praying."

"And you would have avoided a scene at the cost of sacrificing manliness and courage?" said

Behanes. "Well! well! each has his own method of solving a difficulty; but I believe I may say we are all of one mind in thinking that Ignatius did wrong when he refused Communion to the Cæsar."

Andrimades, elated by this conversation, went on his way towards the palace in which Bardas Cæsar resided, anxious to tell him without a moment's delay that the best classes in the capital sympathised with him in his distress, when he came upon two young and noble ladies who, with their personal attendants, were seated under the shade of the "Naval Victory" monument, and were talking in an audible voice.

He went round stealthily, and seated himself within hearing at the opposite side of the marble pile, and perceived with delight that the subject which occupied his thoughts was being airily spoken of by one of these ladies (who appeared to be a married woman), and modestly touched upon by the beautiful girl sitting beside her. Elpidia, who was wife of the Admiral, was endeavouring to elicit from the maiden, whose name was Alethea, the confession of a secret which the other was anxious to keep from her. The attack was adroit, and the parrying equally clever; and Andrimades, as he sat with ears erect, was interested and amused.

"Did you witness the entire scene?" began Elpidia. "For the swaying and rushing of the crowd was such that, though many saw the beginning of it, few could follow it to the end."

"I was in the gallery," said Alethea, "above the heads of the people, and thence all was visible. I

saw the Cæsar enter the church, approach the Sanctuary, confront the Patriarch, draw his sword, and fall to the ground. I saw him carried out, and waited until the church was emptied of its congregation before I came away."

"And your eyes were so exclusively fixed on the Cæsar that you saw no one else?"

"Not so," said Alethea; "I saw and noted all the actors in the scene."

"Ignatius, as a matter of course?"

"Yes."

"Perhaps Assandra too, for she drew near when Bardas fell?"

"I saw her agitated movement."

"You did not see the handsome face of the Turmarch, for his back was turned to you."

"I saw his face."

"And admired it?" inquired the other pointedly.
"Every one must who sees it."

"I am not enthusiastic about mere facial beauty in a man."

"No, nor am I. But beauty with manliness is to be admired?"

"Perhaps so."

"The Turmarch is the embodiment of manliness."

"You think so?"

"Don't you? Come, Alethea."

"He seemed strong, I thought."

"Is that all? Did he not seem magnificent? Has he not a towering figure, martial bearing, exquisite shape? Is he not, in a word, the very type of a soldier?"

"You were not praying, Elpidia, when you took such minute notice of the mien and figure of the Turmarch. *I* was."

"What, praying during that commotion?"

"All the time."

"Do you appreciate spirit and courage in a soldier?" asked Elpidia, changing her mode of assault.

"In every man that is possessed of them."

"But more in a soldier than another?"

"More in a civilian than a soldier, because in the latter one naturally demands them."

"Are all soldiers courageous, think you?"

"I presume they are."

"You are mistaken. Some of them are arrant cowards. Would many soldiers, think you, be found to arrest the arm of an Emperor when about to strike? No, Alethea; neither the Count Dionysius nor the spathair Theodorus would have dared to intervene, even by a word; and here is a young officer laying hands upon a tyrant, and forcing him to desist from his evil work. It was grand. It was magnificent."

"It *was* magnificent," said Alethea, in a musing tone, "and," she added, as if inadvertently, "never to be forgotten."

"I am satisfied," said Elpidia triumphantly. "You will never forget the noble and Christian act performed by this soldier; and when you think of it, his grace, his beauty, his manliness, his athletic form and splendid bearing—will come before your mental eye. Not another word. You have given all I sought. Let us go. The sun declines."

After the ladies had departed, Andrimades rose up from his seat, and having inquired from a passer-by the names of these distinguished persons, proceeded on his way to the house of Bardas Cæsar; to whom he announced the fact that, having lain in wait for unwary speakers, and having got many insults for spying and prying, he saw no good in prosecuting the inquiry any farther: he had elicited the information that the citizens were divided in their views of the moral aspect of the scene in St. Sophia, but that the greater number of them gave their approval to the action of Ignatius.

“It is always so,” said Bardas: “the number of fools is infinite, while sensible men are few. I care not for the opinion of the insane majority. There is one man, and he is not far away, whose judgment weighs more with me than that of half the citizens of Constantinople. I mean the learned Photius, the Court Secretary. Summon him to my presence. I will talk with Photius on the situation, and we will devise a plan by which every one who took part in the disgraceful scene in the church shall receive his deserts; and heavy judgments, I promise you, shall fall upon some of them.”

Photius, summoned by Andrimades, arrived in due course at the residence of Bardas, where he found the Cæsar in a very morose and sulky mood. In the presence of the new arrival he threw off all restraint, and appeared in his true character of an overbearing and vindictive man. He scarcely saluted the Secretary, so preoccupied

was he and swayed by violent emotions, but advancing to meet him, as he entered the room, said, quite abruptly :

" Photius, you have been pained at my humiliation ? "

" More than pained," he replied ; " afflicted beyond what I can say."

" And you believe I ought to gratify my thirst for vengeance on those who have trampled upon me ? "

" As a Christian—no. As the Governor of the State—yes."

" Oh—the Saints confound you !—take me in my combined capacity," said Bardas, chagrined at the distinction.

" As Bardas Cæsar, then, mighty as a ruler and of not much account as a Christian—yes."

" I am not flattered at your estimate of my character," said Bardas.

" I did not intend to flatter you, Cæsar. I rather proposed to rebuke."

" Reserve your rebukes until you are in a position to administer them with authority. Just now I seek neither praise nor censure : it is not even sympathy in my trouble that I want, but information on a point of history."

" What is the point ? " inquired Photius.

" Just this," replied Bardas. " If I were to cast Ignatius out of the Patriarchal Palace, to chase him from the city, to fling his insignia on the ground and trample upon them ; if I were to put a man of my own choice on his throne, could I find a sanction for such acts in the past history of the Church of Constantinople ? "

"You can find a sanction for the removal of Ignatius from the Patriarchate, and for the substitution of another in his place. It may be more difficult to find in past history an example of the violent accompaniments you propose."

"They are of little importance, and can be omitted," said Bardas.

"Then the parallel between what you propose to do and what was done in the reign of Leo the Isaurian is complete."

"Let me hear in detail what happened then."

"Germanus," said the Secretary, "was Patriarch of Constantinople at that time. He was a wise prelate, and much loved by his flock. In an evil hour he came into collision with the ruler of the State. He would not accede to the Emperor's wish for the removal of images from the church, nor would he accept the decrees of a Council which the Emperor had summoned. His conduct was like that of Ignatius, inasmuch as he refused to give to Cæsar what Cæsar would have had."

"Not quite the same," said Bardas, interrupting. "Germanus declined to communicate with the Emperor in certain views—and he did well. Ignatius has done what is perfectly intolerable: he has refused to the ruler of the State communion in the greatest Sacrament of religion."

"Be it so," rejoined Photius. "The treason of Ignatius is more heinous. You can argue by-and-bye that in proportion to the magnitude of his crime should be the number of his stripes. For the present pay attention to my narrative. Germanus refused to subscribe to the decree against

the use of holy images, passed by Leo's assembly. Now, mark the consequences of that refusal. The Emperor sent a body of armed soldiers to the Patriarchal Palace, with orders to arrest Germanus and convey him out of the city; and if he or his servants should offer any opposition, to force him to retire at the point of the sword. The aged Patriarch, then in his eightieth year, was an easy victim to these men of wrath. He left the city, and retired to his family mansion at Platanus; and immediately after his disappearance Anastasius was by order of Leo ordained Patriarch in his place, and put by the Imperial soldiers in possession of the Episcopal throne."

"Could I have supposed there was in our history a case so much to the point, I should not have hesitated so long about punishing this recusant prelate. Now my course is clear before me. I shall, with the approval of Michael, have this caitiff arrested and carried off to some island of the Archipelago; and when his hated visage is seen no more, then I will have some faithful friend of mine, of unsuspected loyalty and easy conscience, put in his place, to rule this Church in accordance with the views of the Court."

"You may not find it easy," said Photius, "to procure a successor to Ignatius. He must be a man of good blood, of notable talents, and of iron will. An ordinary man will not reconcile the people to the change. He must be a star of the first magnitude, who shall outshine the long line of brilliant occupants of this Patriarchal See."

"Such a man as yourself, Photius. Learned

you are, without doubt, and eloquent, and—shall I add?—unscrupulous. You are of patrician blood and connected, in a way, with the Imperial family. You have all the elements required to make an easy-going Court bishop, which is just what we want. More of this another time. Come to me again to-morrow; or, better still, I will in my rambles call upon you. How fortunate that I sent for you! A few of your wise sentences have opened a vista, at the end of which I see a great triumph over my enemies, and peace for my troubled soul. Farewell. We shall meet often: for it will take many interviews to arrange the details of a scheme of such magnitude as that upon which we have entered.”

After this meeting, Bardas and Photius interchanged daily visits, and observers were curious to know the object of their meetings. Some said that no good would come out of their interviews, and others thought that much mischief would be the result; but there was one person to whom these meetings were interesting, beyond all others, and this was Andrimades; for since he had done his eavesdropping commission for Bardas Cæsar, he could take no rest. He had seen, as he said, the beginning of a plot, and he must, if possible, see the end of it. So he became a spy on Photius and his Imperial friend, meeting them separately and together, gathering all the incautious remarks that fell from them, sifting, comparing, and putting them side by side, until he had information enough to satisfy him that Ignatius was to be expelled, within a short time, from Constantinople, and that Photius was to succeed him as Patriarch. Then

he went home, and lay on a couch reflecting for some time. "This big secret," he said to himself at last, "is oppressing me ; I must give it to some one : it is inflating me to suffocation, and will carry me to my grave if I attempt to keep it to myself. I will tell it to Melanus to-morrow."

CHAPTER III.

IN THE MARKET-PLACE OF AUGUSTUS.

LATE in the afternoon of the day following, two men were to be seen walking side by side in the market-place of Augustus, engaged in earnest conversation. From their dress and bearing it was easy to see that they were of patrician rank.

One of them, a robust personage of middle age, wore a hat which almost came to a point above; and his robe, though flowing, was rather short, as if for the purpose of exhibiting his shoes, which were covered with gold and jewels. The other man was tall of stature, and quietly though richly dressed in accordance with the fashion of the day. He might have been mistaken for a Persian, for he wore a tiara on his head, and his ample cloak was undoubtedly of Persian origin. They were discussing some topic which seemed to engross all their attention, for they appeared quite insensible to the sights and bustle around them.

"Dome of St. Sophia," said the stout man, whose acquaintance we have already made, "what a weight I have been carrying since yesterday! I can bear it no longer; I must put a portion of it on your shoulders, Melanus."

"You are always quaint, Andrimades," said the other, "and often, as at present, obscure. What do you mean?"

"Can you keep a secret?"

"I can."

"And you will keep it if I give it to you?"

"I will."

"I mean this—but don't tell it to the Colossus : that Ignatius will have ceased to be Patriarch of Constantinople before the week ends."

"Will he resign the Patriarchate?" inquired Melanus concernedly.

"He may : he may not. Willing or unwilling, he must retire ; he must yield to the decree of this modern puppet-king."

"I don't know of any puppet-king reigning in these parts," said Melanus gravely.

"Don't you know the Cæsar? What is he if not the puppet of Michael III., and a vindictive puppet he is. I tell you, he will never forgive the insult he received from Ignatius at St. Sophia."

"I can realise to myself his thirst for revenge," said Melanus, "and I am convinced that he will have but little scruple as to the means he employs to quench it ; but to deprive Ignatius of the See of Constantinople and to put another in his place must appear, even to the irreligious Cæsar, an impossibility."

"Pshaw!" said Andrimades, "you don't know the shifts of this intriguer. Has he not deposed the Empress Theodora? Has he not persuaded her dutiful son to shut her in a convent, with shaven head, lest she should entertain a desire to return to the throne? A man who has brought down such high game will have no difficulty in crushing a meek and defenceless bishop."

“But will Bardas enter recklessly on the persecution of this good shepherd, in the face of an indignant flock?”

“He will do nothing of the kind. Does the brown bear begin at once to bite and tear the prey he has caught for his evening meal? No, but he gives him a friendly and affectionate hug before he opens his mouth to devour him. So it will be with the Cæsar: he will, through others, suggest to Ignatius that he ought to retire, for his own happiness and peace of mind; this will be the friendly hug. If Ignatius don't take the suggestion, Bardas will show his teeth and raise his paw; and if, after these threats, Ignatius still refuses to yield, Bardas will fall upon him and tear him to pieces.”

“A fitting illustration: you study for the courts of law, my good friend! But what authority have you for the evil news contained under your figure of speech?”

“The best in the city: the man that knows everything, Photius the eunuch, he is my authority. Ye Saints, could I, if I would, lie in such a matter as this! And now, Melanus, I will add to my story something that will take away your breath. Photius is interested deeply, up to his ears and beyond them, in the success of this plot against the Patriarch.”

“The learned Photius! to whom all the Canons are such easy reading, who is so sedate and self-controlled. How can he interest himself in the gross violation of law which is involved in the banishment of a bishop from his see?”

“Photius is a wolf in sheep’s clothing, and he longs to be master of the sheep; he pines for the position of Ignatius. I know I am a babbler, Melanus, as men say; but this time I am not gossiping, I am but saying what I know to be true.”

“This, then, is the outcome of those frequent meetings of Photius, Bardas, and the Emperor, and of those secret and mysterious discussions between them, which have been for some time eagerly watched by the senators, and spoken of freely in the basilicas. Photius, the layman, to be Bishop and Patriarch! What impiety, what injustice! But it cannot be: no bishop can be found to ordain the eunuch.”

“Perhaps not; but is there not a schismatical bishop who is an intimate friend of Photius? I don’t know his name, nor that of his see; but I think I have heard of some such person: he may impose hands on the Secretary.”

“There is Gregory, the deposed Bishop of Syracuse, he is a friend of Photius; it is well known that the eunuch supported him in his revolt against Ignatius. He is the schismatical bishop of whom you have heard. He is a bold man, and without scruple, and may, undoubtedly, do a favour to his patron, even at the sacrifice of principle and conscience. But, Andrimades,” said Melanus solemnly, “besides being a listener to Court gossip and a spy upon Court intrigue, you are a Christian, at least by profession. May I ask whether you have ever protested, even mildly, against these profane projects?”

"My dear Melanus," said he, "I have other matters to interest and trouble me: I take no part in polemical or religious questions; I listen, that's all. I don't like collisions. I make it a point not to contradict anyone. Others have their tastes; I have mine. I love an ample meal, and a jar of Chian wine; I don't object to the chase; if some in high places prefer to run down human game, I take it to be their tendency, and I tolerate it, and perhaps without approving, I refrain from speaking against it: I love a quiet life. These are my principles."

' You will forgive me if I say that such principles are unworthy of your position as a patrician, and contrary to your profession as a Christian."

"Spare me: I cannot help it. I am but a poor Christian: the little religion I had has been squeezed out of me at Court. I promise you that, for the future, I will not even listen to the eunuch. I go to the table at three o'clock. I shall have carp from the Danube and a boar's head exquisitely cooked. Come, without ceremony, and join me in a little carouse. I am now for a bath to give me an appetite. I hope——"

"A message from the Emperor," interposed a herald, "to the patrician Andrimades: to meet him, without delay, in the covered alley of the Palace garden opening on the statue of St. Cassia."

CHAPTER IV.

THE SCHOLAR OF THE AGE.

WHO was this Photius, about whom so many were speaking at that time ? It would be too little to say of him that he was one of the learned men of the day, or that he was a man of rare ability, or that he was a diligent student, a canonist, or an historian : for he was all these, and much more. He was a logician and a rhetorician, a debater of no ordinary power, and a pleader who could carry his audience with him in his most lofty flights. He was as full of ecclesiastical as he was of secular lore ; and was the saviour from oblivion of many ancient works on all subjects which were hidden away in remote monasteries of the East, and would have perished for ever but for this remarkable bookworm.

The moral character of this noted man did not reach the high level of his intellectual reputation. He was proud, ambitious, and even cruel ; with but little regard for truth, or even for the obligation of an oath. He was a very Luther in action : strong, burly, and defiant ; and he could be, and was, under provocation, as determined a Pope-hater as the reformer of the sixteenth century. The world owes much to Photius for his researches, it is true ; and he is a refreshing figure for the modern student to look at, in an age that was not Augustinian ; but he was a criminal of a bad type nevertheless, because he was ready to sacrifice the most precious

interests of his Church to a selfish and wholly indefensible egoism.

And yet, notwithstanding his many shortcomings, we cannot without a sigh withdraw our eyes and our admiration from Photius, as we follow him through the monasteries of the Greek islands, in search of the treasures of the past ; or look at him, still over his books after all night study, as the grey light of morning is streaming in through the window of his apartment ; or as we watch the fatherly affection with which he regards his treasures as he weaves them into an imperishable tissue of Canon Law, or into History that shall live for ever.

Photius was not an adventurer who had come to the surface by intrigue or ability, but was born to a high position. He was a patrician, and nearly related to a former prince of the Church, being grand-nephew of the Patriarch Taræsius. He was connected with the reigning Imperial family too, through his uncle, who had married the sister of the Empress Theodora. He was very rich : and he held a high office at Court, being First Secretary to the Emperor Michael.

Such was the man selected by Bardas Cæsar to be Patriarch of Constantinople in succession to Ignatius, whom he was resolved to depose : and an abler man or a more suitable instrument wherewith to work out his plans could not have been found within the limits of the Empire. His rare talents and knowledge of ecclesiastical law and history made him a power for good or evil, and his easy conscience would carry him lightly over such

scruples as might cross the path of his advance to a goal prohibited no less by the moral than by the Canon Law. Bardas was gratified beyond measure at the choice he had made, and only waited for the assent of the Emperor to put his friend on the Patriarchal throne. This assent came more quickly than he expected.

"You are plotting against someone," said Michael, as he came unexpectedly on Bardas and Photius, who were conversing mysteriously and in a low tone. "May I be admitted to your confidence?"

"On you we depend entirely. We have been considering whether our austere and unreasonable Patriarch could not be deposed, and banished from the city," said Bardas.

"Why not?" responded Michael. "Banish him: hunt him out like a wolf, and calculate on me to aid and protect you. He has outraged me as well as you. He has doggedly refused to make nuns of my mother and sisters. Away with him. Make someone else Bishop. I don't care who it may be. Photius there is clever enough to be a bishop, and unscrupulous enough to be of the Court of St. Michael III. Make Photius Patriarch of Constantinople. I don't know any man so fit for the position."

"It is very strange, Most August, that at the moment when you came upon us I was sounding the Secretary on the subject of his appointment to this office. But he is too scrupulous and too humble. He has no ambition, he says, for such a post, and he trembles at the weight of the episcopacy."

“He must not,” said Michael; “he shall take courage. We will give him a helping hand. You, Cæsar, are clever enough to govern the See for him. But my opinion is that Photius, once a bishop, will rule the Church with an iron rod and an undivided sway.”

Photius was intensely pleased at hearing these words of the Emperor, and yet he could not divest himself of a feeling of uneasiness. He had made no objection to Bardas' plan for dealing with Ignatius, but he felt that a plea of justification should accompany the employment of it. Such a thing as a brutal removal of Ignatius and a bare-faced substitution of himself would not meet the exigencies of the case. Public opinion must be satisfied to a certain extent, at least at the beginning; and the flock must be persuaded that the Canons, though perhaps strained, had not been entirely put aside. The Bishops, too, as well of the Province of Constantinople as of the East generally, would have to be satisfied; and there was reason to fear that many of them would not easily be reconciled to the purposed change. He was perplexed and even bewildered: for it seemed probable, too, that Ignatius would appeal for protection to the Bishop of Rome, as many of his predecessors had appealed in similar circumstances, and would be taken under the shielding arm of that Apostolic See. Hence he concluded that both caution and despatch were necessary: the former to give an appearance of legality to their proceedings, and the latter to prevent complications which were sure to arise if they moved too slowly.

But would Michael and Bardas Cæsar see the necessity of caution? Would they recognise the importance of haste? It was under the influence of fear, arising out of these unanswered questions, that he called upon Bardas late one evening, and after saluting him, hurriedly said: "We have started, I fear, on a race without a goal."

"You think so," said the other; "I do not. The end is to me as visible as the beginning."

"Verily, a long vision!" said Photius. "That I may be Patriarch of Constantinople, ordination and election are necessary, and the sanction of the Bishop of Rome."

"You know the Bishop Gregory of Syracuse," said Bardas, "who has been deposed by Ignatius?"

"Yes, intimately."

"What, think you, are his sentiments as regards the Patriarch?"

"Of hostility, I should suppose."

"Of more than hostility: he would be glad to see Ignatius a fugitive, as he is himself."

"Is he so vindictive?"

"He will be ready, through hatred of Ignatius, to facilitate your usurpation of his See."

"What can he do to that end?"

"Can he not ordain you deacon, priest, and bishop?"

"Yes; but will he take so bold a step?"

"Willingly. He has promised."

"Then you have addressed him on the subject?"

"He is only one of many whom I have enlisted in your service."

"I do not quite understand."

"You have said that ordination and election are necessary. Gregory has been secured for your ordination. The Bishops of the Province have been canvassed for your election."

"A bold step, while Ignatius is still in occupation of the See."

"It has been represented to them that Ignatius must go: that he is distasteful to the Emperor, and an object of loathing to the Cæsar. They have been furnished with a precedent, and have been asked the question: 'When Ignatius abdicates, as abdicate he must, whom will you elect in his place?'"

"Who has had the boldness to put such a question to the Bishops of the Province of Constantinople?"

"You know there is but one man in the Empire that would dare to do so."

"Yourself?"

"And I have threatened, and humoured, and cajoled them in turn; and, by my diplomacy, I have partially undermined a great wall of opposition."

"What of the religious aspect of the case? Have you no conscientious scruples?"

"As little as yourself, Photius."

"We are like a pair of thieves, striving to break into a man's house in the silence of the night."

"Be it so: or, if you will, assassins, waiting for an opportunity to take the life of an enemy."

"In my new spiritual dignity, I protest against these similes."

“ Who was the first to introduce them ? ”

“ Let us waive the point.”

“ Willingly ; and represent ourselves as a pair of doves building a nest for a coming fledgeling.”

“ Of the Bishops I am anxious to know. What think they of my candidature ? How did they receive my name ? ”

“ Less than indifferently. They protested against the removal of Ignatius, and would themselves elect, if he should abdicate.”

“ Three names as usual ? ”

“ Yes, three names.”

“ Mine not of the number ? ”

“ Presumably not.”

“ Then what did you do ? ”

“ Trust to Bardas Cæsar for diplomacy. I feigned to adopt their views. I praised them for their adherence to the Canons. I had, I admitted, a partiality for the reserved and learned Photius. The Emperor, too, was favourable to him. I saw no one else equal to him among possible claimants to the Patriarchal chair. Such remarks, thrown out with a show of indifference, made a deep impression on some of the Bishops ; others received them with more reserve. I reminded the latter that they held their Sees at the pleasure of the Emperor, and that their promotion to higher positions was in his hands. I paid many compliments to the disinterestedness of their body and their learning, and expressed my conviction that, in this age of progress, they would see the necessity of putting a brilliant scholar at the head of the Eastern Church. The day following I renewed my

pleading, and urged the necessity of an immediate decision, on the grounds that Ignatius had virtually abdicated, and that hesitation in appointing a successor might lead to civil strife. Finally they gave way, one by one, with the exception of five, and promised to elect you to the Episcopal chair, on the condition that Ignatius should make it vacant by retiring voluntarily."

"A brave and clever manœuvre," said Photius, who was becoming quite elated as Bardas evolved his irreligious scheme, "and worthy of the astute mind that directed it; but who, I pray you, are the five recusants?"

"Oh!" said Bardas, languidly, "that religious fool, Metrophanes of Smyrna, and his tail."

"Would they have me on any conditions?"

"They would, if you should consent to efface yourself."

"How efface myself?"

"By signing a document composed of many objectionable clauses."

"I pray you do not conceal these clauses from me."

"They are as follow," said the Cæsar, reading from a paper: "That you shall acknowledge Ignatius to be the legitimate Patriarch of Constantinople; that you shall remain in communion with him; that you shall honour him as your father in God; that you shall not, under any circumstances, annoy or upbraid him; that you shall keep aloof from his enemies and accusers; and, finally, that you shall anathematise the schism of Gregory of Syracuse."

"This document," said Photius, "supposes two Patriarchs, and implies that I shall be only an assistant to Ignatius. Should you be content with this arrangement?"

"No, I should not, nor with any arrangement that should not include the removal of Ignatius for good. Do not sign this document if it be put before you; time will bring us easier terms from these over-scrupulous prelates."

"In vital matters I leave nothing to chance, and I do not believe that the future will do what the present time cannot accomplish. I must be canonically elected to the See of Constantinople; and if there be nothing between me and that election but these clauses, I will, if necessary, sign every one of them separately. What is to prevent me from setting them aside later on?"

"Nothing, as far as I see, but the fear of losing your character for uprightness. 'Perjured' is not a pretty epithet."

"If I have to bear it my conscience will not upbraid me."

"But the disgrace of it! If I were in your position I would bide my time. The recusant Bishops are sure to yield after they shall have made a decent show of resistance."

"But delay, in this case, is full of danger. For while I, through a conscientious scruple, am putting off the happy day of my election to the Patriarchate, Ignatius, even from his prison, may find a way of putting his case before the Bishop of Rome, and complaining that he has been driven from his See uncanonically."

"But will you prevent this appeal by indecent haste in signing a promise that you are fully resolved to repudiate?"

"I may not, it is true, prevent it; but I shall, at the least, nullify its effect: for, as soon as I am the elect of the Bishops I will put myself in communication with Rome. I will anticipate Ignatius; I will write a plausible letter, and send it by a quick messenger to the Pope. In it I will give an account of Ignatius' abandonment of the See, and my advancement to his position. My story, I need not say, will not be full, nor entirely candid: shall I say it will be garbled or one-sided? No, plausible is the word: I will make a case for the Pope so intrinsically plausible, so moderate, so disinterested, that it shall carry conviction with it. I will strengthen it by asking his Holiness to send legates to this city, for the purpose of aiding me to extirpate the germs of the Iconoclastic heresy which show a tendency to sprout again. My humility, combined with zeal, will, I feel confident, convince Pope Nicholas of my thorough disinterestedness: he will send his legates here, and they, in his name, will give their sanction to my election."

"Did not Gregory of Syracuse appeal to Rome, a year ago, against a deposing sentence pronounced upon him by Ignatius?"

"Every one knows that he did."

"Now, tell me, what was the result of that appeal?"

"Hitherto there has been no result: the Pope has been slow and cautious, and has not yet decided in favour of Gregory or against him."

"And will the Pope, think you, act rashly and precipitately in your case?"

"I do not believe that he will: but I am certain that he will send his legates here; and when they come we can precipitate matters."

"I fail to see how we can; for on the arrival of the Pope's legates in this city they will be waited upon by Metropolitans and other Bishops, and will receive from them a detailed account of all that has occurred, and, among other items, of your violation of your solemn written promise. In due time they will make their report to the Bishop of Rome, and he will have you up for usurping the Patriarchate of Constantinople."

"Confound the Bishop of Rome!" said Photius testily. "I wish we were rid of him altogether."

"But you cannot shake him off," said Bardas. "I wish you could. I would aid you, by every means within my power, to free this capital of the East from a foreign spiritual domination; but for the present we must admit the authority of the Bishop of Rome, and allow him the time-honoured privilege of intervening in the disputes of our Church. Do not, however, I beg you, put me down as disapproving of your clever plans to deceive the Pope; and though I am opposed to your signing the document of which we have been speaking, I make no doubt you will devise a plan by which you will escape the consequences if the legates report against you."

"I have already devised a plan, in the carrying out of which I hope to receive aid from you. We will isolate the legates from the moment they enter

this city, and will not suffer any persons to approach them but our friends, and so they shall hear our side of the story only, and must report favourably of me to his Holiness."

"But if, notwithstanding these precautions, they refuse to take sides with you, and, like their principal and employer, prefer to dally with the question; to take information and not to pronounce judgment, and to insist on hearing Ignatius' version of the dispute, what will you do?"

"In that improbable case I shall, if driven to it, take a course that will send a shock through the universal Christian Church."

"These are strong expressions, Photius; too strong, as it appears to me. You are too impetuous, and lack patience. Time will bring us the victory."

"Have you confidence in my ability?"

"Who has not?"

"In my knowledge of history and Canon Law?"

"I have."

"In my prudence?"

"Well—in your duplicity."

"Then leave all to me, and fear not for the result."

With mingled feelings of elation and chagrin Photius left the Palace, and turned his footsteps towards home. He entered the vestibule of his house with some misgiving. There was a cloud upon his brow. "Confound me," he muttered, "that I should be so weak! I, who am prepared to trample on truth and justice, and to make light of the obligation of an oath. I, who am crafty

enough to deceive, and bold enough to defy the head of the Universal Church, am afraid of the censure of a woman—of one who is little more than a child. If I could secure Alethea's approval of my plans, I could have defied even the Emperor, if he had opposed them."

The lady that Photius referred to in this soliloquy was the daughter of Calomæra, a cousin of the Empress Theodora, and of Theodore, a remote connexion of the reigning Imperial family. She had been his ward since her twelfth year, when she lost both her parents. This dark and crafty man, daring and not to be controlled, looked up to the girl with a feeling that bordered on reverence, though she was even now only in her seventeenth year; and if any maiden of that day might be taken as a type of the earlier Greek civilisation, softened and controlled by Christianity, it was this gifted and highly accomplished woman. In figure she was tall, and slender without fragility, while the freshness of the opening rose lay on her noble features, and the beauty of ancient Greece on the form of her face and head. There was no defect in her outward mould: and life in no sluggish stream coursed through that shapely frame, and looked out through those brilliant eyes.

But it was not her physical beauty alone that attracted the reverence of her ambitious guardian, but her wonderful mental gifts and singular elevation of character.

Perhaps it was that to himself she owed the awaking of that clear intellect, and that much of the knowledge she had acquired was traceable to

the lessons she had received at his knee. But he forgot all this when he listened with delight to the ripple of her musical voice, discoursing of Christian ethics and history, and even of the deeper problems of philosophy. "I must secure the approval of Alethea," he went on. "There would be for me a skeleton at the board if I thought she condemned my proceedings."

He called her by her name, but she answered not. He passed rapidly through the great hall of the house, and approached the chamber where he knew she enclosed herself when alone. As he approached he heard the lyre touched, and Alethea's voice chanting a light melody. He drew near, noiselessly, and listened with breathless attention to the song:

"Love you not the Grecian sky,
Its lights and shadows fleeting by?"
"Not I," said Age, but with a sigh.
"Or would you bathe in liquid air,
And linger, like a lapwing, there,
Lulled in the streaming sunlight fair?"
"Ah me, so soon with earth to blend,
Pray, why should I to pleasure lend,"
Quoth Age, "the hours that soon will end?"
"In light and life to revel, I,"
Cried Youth, "am panting, and I sigh
To snatch the blossom ere it die.
Enough for me the present hour,
To linger yet in Beauty's bower.
Stir not my heart's unplumbèd deep,
Suffer it still in peace to sleep.
Gloom has his kingdom in the grave,
Where love and joy no haven have."

"I was delighted with the concluding verse of your song," said Photius, drawing aside the curtain

and entering the apartment. "It is a reflection of a more joyous and earthly spirit than is yours generally, and augurs a good reception for a piece of worldly news that I am about to communicate to you."

"Worldly?" she echoed.

"Well," said he, "perhaps not worldly. No, decidedly not worldly. But some startling information. Startling, and I hope it will be for you not disagreeable. It is that your guardian is to be the Patriarch of Constantinople."

"You, Patriarch of Constantinople!" said the girl, with an expression of astonishment, "the idea is extravagant. If you had a habit of joking, I should put down what you have said to an outburst of humour."

"I am most serious, my ward," he said, "when taking you into my confidence in relation to this important and, for me, vital subject. Ignatius will soon be far from this city, and he shall never return as Patriarch. The city must have a Bishop: the Bishop of Constantinople must be Patriarch; and your guardian has been already chosen to fill the Episcopal throne."

"Chosen!" said she, "pray by whom chosen? You have taught me some ecclesiastical law and a little history, but you have never told me that a layman may be chosen for a See that is already filled; and I have believed up to this time that neither layman nor cleric could be duly appointed to a vacant Episcopal chair without canonical election."

"It is a part of the arrangement, as a matter

of course, that Ignatius shall vacate the See. His friends will induce him to go, for peace' sake. If, however, he declines to yield to the advice of his friends, pressure will be put upon him, and he must resign."

"But is this fair?" said the girl earnestly. "Is it just that a worthy and learned prelate should be made a stepping-stone for another man, on which he may mount to his throne? Is it fair to ask him to resign? Is it just to compel him?"

"You press me too closely, girl," said Photius testily. "Have I never told you that, when Church and State are disputing for a path, the former should give way?"

"You have never taught me such doctrine; but the contrary. You have always held before my eyes the Divine and superior mission of the Church."

"Then I tell you now distinctly that, when the ruler of the Church cannot reconcile himself to the ways and manners of the ruler of the State he must retire."

"You would have the Patriarch to tolerate, ignore, or connive at the public and scandalous vices of the Emperor and the Cæsar, and thereby commit a great sin?"

"What is sin, maiden?" said Photius lightly. "What is virtue? Why is there a world? Everything is involved in doubt. Is it certain that there is anything provable? Why, is not all, ourselves included, a vast negation? In the uncertainty even of moral principles, a man becomes a fool if he does not seize upon every opportunity of advancing himself."

"It was not thus you taught me in the past, Photius, before ambition set you on fire ; and your early teaching has sunk so deep into my soul that it cannot now be removed by profanity. Is there, indeed, a world? you ask," and she continued passionately : "But there is a world, a beautiful world, a disciplined world—a world, in its material and animated parts, carrying out a great design. And if there be a great design in creation, where is there room to doubt as to the existence of a great Designer? If there be a great Designer planning and governing the physical world, He must preside over a moral world too, which He has created. You ask me what is sin? what is virtue? I say the former is the violation of the laws regulating the world of morals ; the latter is their fulfilment. I, therefore, believing that moral principles are fixed and unalterable, can see no justification for their violation in the interest of avarice or ambition."

"Well argued, Alethea," said Photius with a smile. "A Christian philosopher I aver: I am proud of you. I should feel inclined to submit another question for your consideration, but perhaps it is too deep for the mind of a woman. I reserve it for my justification."

"Pray what may it be?"

"I should wish to withhold it," said Photius solemnly, "but if you must have it, here it is. The human mind can understand non-existence, and can look without blinking at an eternal vacuum: but it cannot take in existence eternal on both sides ; and hence it rebels against the existence of a being

who has had no beginning. I do not wish to disturb your convictions; I should be far from leading you into the path of unbelief: but as I am entering on a course that you condemn, and which you say is against the moral law, I must justify myself for the moment by the argument of the sceptic."

"You should not use so profane an argument; but it affects me not. For its newness it puzzles me; but I feel that it is specious only, and has no solid foundation. I shall seek an answer to it, and when I have found it I will bring it to you. Meanwhile, when you come to a better mind, don't feel uneasy for me: your words have passed over like a fleet arrow, but have not touched my convictions or my faith."

"I have often thought," said Photius, "that there is a specific difference between the male and female brains: you women are so tenacious, while men are fickle and changeable."

"Is it not rather the contrary? Are not we universally looked upon as the weak and fickle sex?"

"You may be in some respects. In religion you are the strong sex."

"I cannot believe it," said she, "while the monasteries are peopled with Saints and the Church is governed by holy men. We can claim only the merit of holding the doctrines that have been instilled into us; and, endeavouring to reduce their moral precepts to practice, and being out of the way of temptations to change our lives or principles, we persevere in a straight course."

"Then," said he, "our falls and shortcomings are the result of temptation, and, to bring the question

home, my aspiration to the office of Patriarch is the dictate of ambition."

"Such is my belief," said Alethea decisively.

"Notwithstanding which belief," said Photius, rising to depart, "you will see me ordained and elevated to the episcopacy before long, and then reigning with lustre on the Patriarchal throne, whence I shall shed the light of knowledge into the remotest corners of the Empire.

"But," he murmured, as he went away, "she is a noble and gifted girl, of whose elevated character and rare abilities an Emperor might feel proud: and I have contributed to make her what she is."

CHAPTER V.

AN ACCOMPLISHED MAIDEN AND A LEARNED PHILOSOPHER.

TRUE to the promise she had made to her guardian, Alethea on the following day bent her course to the great School of Magnaura, with a view to confer with Leo the philosopher on the various questions raised during her discussion with Photius, and, above them all, on his profane objection to the existence of the Eternal.

So distinguished a visitor, arriving at the School accompanied by two female slaves, was received with much respect and even affability by Leo ; and when she told him the object of her visit he was doubly interested, and protested that it would be a pleasure to him to hear all she had to say, and to give her all the aid he could towards the solution of the problem that perplexed her.

She touched upon the various points of the discussion, giving a definite account of the thrusts and parries that it gave rise to, and finally came to the principal question "which," she said, "is the cause of my coming to you : for its profanity has given me a shock, while its novelty has closed my mouth ; for I found not an answer to it out of my limited knowledge of controversy. Photius put it in this form : the human mind can understand non-existence, and can regard without blinking the idea of an eternal vacuum, but it cannot take in

existence eternal on both sides ; and hence it rebels against the belief in a being who has had no beginning. I promised him that I would seek for the solution of this quibble, and that when found I would bring it to him."

"The professors," said Leo, "are at this moment assembled in our large lecture hall ; I will put you behind a curtain that divides it from a smaller apartment, and I will, for your information, raise a discussion with them on this, one of the most thrilling subjects of Christian philosophy. I will so lead them on that you shall gain the information you desire, and, in the end, to make all clear, I will summarise all that shall have been said."

Alethea, after expressing her thanks, took the position assigned to her, and listened with close attention.

"Well met, Theodorus," began Leo. "You are the geometrician of the age ; can you measure eternity for me?"

"I cannot. Theodegus is among the stars ; he, perhaps, may find the beginning there."

"There is no better professor of astronomy than Theodegus," said Leo ; "but I fear the beginning cannot be read in his book."

"Perhaps the end can be found there," said Theodorus.

"The end," continued Leo, "or, to speak accurately, the absence of an end, is not difficult to conceive ; not so the beginning. Photius thinks that the human mind cannot take in existence without a beginning, and hence rebels against the belief in the eternal."

"How profane!" said Theodegus; but I presume he says this not in his character of a believer in revelation, but as a philosopher."

"I am afraid," said Leo, "that he pronounces it in the double capacity."

"Fie! the learned Photius!"

"Let him be," said Leo; "I am not charged with his conscience; but it seems to me that, being unable to reconcile his faith with his practice, he takes refuge in philosophy."

"Think you," said Theodorus, "that even philosophy gives any grounds on which to build a theory such as that you attribute to Photius?"

"I say decidedly no," replied Leo. "On the contrary, philosophy infers the existence of a supreme, unlimited, and eternal intelligence, from its observation of the wondrous works around us, and that by the simplest process of reasoning; thus a boat does not make itself, nor a wheel, nor a bridge, nor a house; and when you look closely into the mechanism of any of these objects, and ask yourself how they came into being, you are forced to conclude that they were put together by an intelligent worker. By a parity of argument, the philosopher must infer the existence of an intelligence, larger than the world, and older than the world, to account for the mechanism of the vast and complicated machine; and who is blind enough not to see that such an intelligence must be inborn? Notwithstanding this, philosophy is supposed to be a safe refuge for the unbeliever; and often will the sceptic, if asked: 'Do you believe in the existence of God?' answer, 'No; I

have ceased to be a Christian, and I have become a philosopher.' But you drive him out of his shelter if you ask him to state for you the objection of philosophy to God ; for he will either be silent, or he will unfold before your eyes a roll of parchment containing some childish and senseless system contrived to account for the existence of things."

"I was far from expecting so ready an answer," said Theodorus. "Your mind appears to be full of this subject."

"And why should it not be ? It has been forced upon me lately by many good and some profane men calling upon me and saying (I suppose in consequence of the impious exhibitions that are so often seen in the streets of this city), 'We are going back fast to paganism.'"

"Avert it, ye gods !" said Theodegus, laughing.

"I can assure you," said Leo, "that there is pestilence in the air, and I consider it the duty of a Christian philosopher to endeavour to purify the atmosphere."

"I go with you entirely," said Cometas, the professor of grammar, who had been a silent listener up to this time ; "we are all proud of your learning, ability, and zeal in the cause of truth. You have effectually disposed of Photius' proposition : that the human mind rebels against the existence of a being that has had no beginning. This mistake you have corrected ; this error you have refuted : but as a grammarian I take up the previous clause of Photius' indecent utterances—the clause which led him to his conclusion, and

by which he tries to justify it : that the human mind cannot take in existence eternal on both sides. This clause has been silently preying on my mind during the greater part of your learned discussion, and I have been asking myself the questions, Is it true? Is it false? Is it impious? I would ask you, most learned Principal, to say if it is lawful to hold that the mind of man cannot take in the eternity of God?"

"I do not," said Leo, "recognise unlimited elasticity in the human mind ; and I regard that mind as a step in the long ladder that ascends from the lowest form of life, through instinct, always increasing in power and brightness, to the domain of reason, and through that domain, in its various degrees and stages, to God. It appears to me folly to assume that the human mind is able to take in all knowledge. It can do everything within its own sphere, I admit, but there is a sphere beyond it which it can penetrate by induction and by faith, but not by vision. Thus when such a point as life without a beginning is proposed for consideration, the well-poised human mind fears to look too closely at it, because the idea is too large for its capacity, and merely says : I accept it, but I cannot understand it. The unbeliever says : I don't understand it, and consequently I reject it. Differing in practice with regard to the acceptance of this dogma, the Christian and the infidel agree in their appreciation of it under one respect, both confessing that it belongs to an order of ideas beyond the scope of human intelligence."

"And yet," interrupted Theodegus, "the human mind can soar to the highest heavens. We can, in my department, accompany the comets on their march through infinite space; we can follow the movements of the sun and moon through centuries of travel, and tell when they will come into eclipse."

"True," said Leo; "but in these sublime processes you do not come into the presence of the Eternal. I am far from saying that there may not be minds of a far higher power of comprehension than man in his highest development, or that such minds may not realise the eternity of God, though I should doubt as to their power of doing so, if they were ever placed on this sphere, and encased in bodies of flesh. But let the mind escape from its prison, let it pass into the world of spirits, then, perhaps, it will understand what an infinite spirit is, and how natural it is that it should exist from all eternity. But as long as the observation of man is confined to objects above, below, and around him, which have had a beginning, he cannot adequately take in the Necessarily Existing Being."

Discussions like this, resembling in some particulars the speculations of many of the moderns, exercised the acute Greek mind in the middle of the ninth century; and why should it not have been so? The professors of the School of Magnaura had the same deep well from which to draw the waters.

Leo had the philosophers of ancient Greece in his hands, and he read them and understood their meaning as well as Kant or Hume. This Leo

was a man who was far in advance of his epoch ; he was a man of large experience and extensive travel, not one of your mere schoolmen, whose minds sometimes may be supposed to be cramped and prejudiced by the rigid limitations of their method. In his various journeyings, always availing himself of the advantages of such schools and professors as came in his way, he picked up a knowledge of music, arithmetic, grammar, poetry, and rhetoric ; but his most curious performance, and that which gave shape and colour to his career, was his retreat to the top of a high mountain, where for years he devoted himself to the study of philosophy, the one science which had for him an attraction and a value above all others. Such a man could not rest insensible to the many subtle questionings arising out of the science that he loved ; and after becoming professor in the school of Bardas Cæsar, he was always prepared to discuss with his fellow-professors or with occasional visitors the intricate problems which lie between the domains of philosophy and revelation, always preserving an attitude of reverence towards the latter : for he was not one of those pedants who would exclude religion from the higher regions of thought, but a firm believer, who deemed it his duty, like Justin, Tatian, and the other early apologists, to defend Christianity against hostile attacks, no matter from what quarter they proceeded.

Did Leo, when discussing for Alethea's instruction the sublime doctrine of Eternal Existence on philosophical grounds, and, as we shall see in the

next chapter, the atomic theory for the information of Photius, discover or even suspect the deeper mine, charged with more astute objections to religion, which has exploded in our time?

CHAPTER VI.

A PHILOSOPHICAL DISPUTATION.

AFTER taking into her clear and capacious mind the substance of the dialogue just narrated, Alethea rose to depart ; and having cordially thanked the philosopher for the privilege he had granted her, she took the line of streets that led most directly to the house of her guardian, expecting to find him, as usual, poring over his books, and determined to put before him the philosophical argument she had just heard. But he was in a strange mood. He was abstracted and distant in manner. He had, he said, spent a restless night, and he must go to the School of Philosophy to discuss with its Principal a theory which had been for some time forcing itself upon his mind, and which, if tenable, would be an agreeable solace. Saying which, he left his ward abruptly, and turned his face towards the Palace of Magnaura.

Encountering Leo in the porch of the building, where he had remained ruminating listlessly since the departure of Alethea, he said, without preface :

“I have called upon you to-day because I have been restless in spirit and disturbed in conscience by reason of some curious philosophical ideas which have been lately forcing themselves upon my mind.”

“I should have thought,” replied Leo, “that

History or Canon Law would be more in your line of thought than philosophy."

"Be that as it may, for the moment regard me as a philosopher."

"Wise man of Athens, then, say in what I can assist you."

"Is it not a fact that the philosophers of ancient Greece assigned the beginning of all things to the elements—to air, or earth, or fire, or water? If this be so, and if such theories be defensible—or, perhaps, I should rather say irrefutable—would it not follow from them that the world is self-created?"

"The philosophers of Greece," said Leo solemnly, "were many, and of various shades of thought in accounting for the beginning of things. It would be doing them an injustice, as a school, to draw a general conclusion against the creation of the world by God from the vagaries of some of their body. Not a few of them, like Xenophanes, were firm believers in the 'One and All.' Others, as you have said correctly, attributed the beginning of things to the elements, but not necessarily as to a creative power. The air theory of Anaximanes and the water theory of Thales are, it must be admitted, profane, exclusive, and, if you will, impious; notwithstanding which, the current of Greek philosophical thought did not run towards the positive denial of a Creator, even at that remote period, and we find Anaximander of Miletus laying down in his writings a difference between 'all things finite' and 'the Infinite All.'"

"Was not Democritus, the greatest of these

ancient wise men, a pronounced unbeliever in God ? ”

“ He was not the greatest of the Grecian philosophers, nor does his atomic theory necessarily exclude a Creator. He merely said : ‘ The atom, being indivisible, is necessarily one ; and being one, is self-existent.’ ”

“ But if I mistake not,” said Photius, “ Democritus advanced a step farther, and gave to his self-existent atom a creative power ? ”

“ I do not think so,” said Leo, reflecting, “ unless what you say be a fair deduction from his well-known dicta that atoms invisible and intangible are the primary elements, and that all things are but modes of the triple arrangements of atoms—by configuration, combination, and position.”

“ Exactly what has seized upon my fancy. One of the greatest of the ancient philosophers has said, first, that the atom is one and self-existent ; secondly, that this self-existent atom has ‘ put in position, combined, and configured ’ the world and everything within it. Hence I conclude that, in the mind of Democritus, the atom is the creator of the universe.”

“ If I allow your inference to be correct, which I shall for the present, and for argument’s sake only, what will you make of it ? ”

“ I will,” said Photius, “ introduce the industrious atom, and show him to you at work before the ages.”

“ I should like to hear you on the subject,” said the philosopher.

“ I will ask you,” said Photius, reading from a

manuscript, "to look with me at the atom of Democritus at work. Regard him : he is not a living atom, like the smallest insect that floats in the air ; he is not, strictly speaking, a dead atom, inasmuch as he is self-existent. Where he got the principle of self-existence is beside the question for the present."

" Ah, truly," interrupted Leo, " where did he get the principle of self-existence?—this is the vital point. But go on."

" Where he came from is not under discussion," continued Photius.

" But it should be, now and always. But go on," said Leo.

" He is an atom, equipped like an atom ; not air determinately, not earth, not fire, not water ; a puny atom, less than the smallest living things that fly around us invisible. All the time he is an active and essentially industrious atom, who cannot rest, and is loth to remain alone. And so he begins to stir, and then to move out of his isolation ; and then he meets with other atoms, wandering like himself, and he joins their company and they combine, myriads of them, and thus form the earth, sun, moon, and stars. It must be granted, I believe, that the earth is a combination of atoms, and we may infer that the heavenly bodies are nothing more. Why, you may ask me, is the earth a dark mass, and the heavenly bodies luminous, if both are of the same material ? I answer candidly, I do not know why ; but I suppose it is because the position of the composing atoms is not the same in both. Following on the lines of Democritus, we

have formed the spheres by a combination of indivisible and self-existent atoms, and made light and darkness out of their different relative positions : it remains for us to make, out of the same element, trees, reptiles, animals, and man ; or, in other words, bodies, souls, and life. Here again Democritus comes to our aid, when he tells us of the figure-making power of atoms. All growing and living things are of the same material, coarsely, finely, or exquisitely configurate ; some roughly put together, so as to form trunks of trees ; others closely pressed, so as to form animal and human bodies ; others, again, eliminated of gross particles to form souls. This is, in brief, my theory of existence. I stand by it ; I will defend it against objectors ; and, if you wish, I will prove it by the argument of experience."

"An ingenious theory," said Leo, "and intelligibly expressed, but not provable, and, least of all, by the argument of experience. Those atoms of yours are wonderfully lively and constructive, but, unfortunately for your system, they are not the atoms of our experience. Atoms, as we find them, must of necessity be the same as yours ; but our atoms of themselves can do nothing original, or that shows a design. I shall convey my views more easily to your mind and, at the same time, prove their truth by an illustration. There are in the ocean islands uninhabited by any living thing ; on these atoms have had a free hand to work from the beginning of the world. What have they done during these countless ages ? They have followed a changeless course of growing into trees and

grasses, then falling into decay, and, finally, crumbling into dust. Or they have swelled into a burning mountain, to discharge fire and ashes over smiling plains, and disfigure, destroy, and efface them. Or they have moved as a floating morass, or fallen as a landslide, or been washed away by surrounding waves, or, by agglomeration of particles, have pushed an outpost into the green sea. These, as far as we can discover, are the only initiations that atoms have produced, in this remote and lifeless isle, during six decades of centuries, and——”

“Not so fast, O modern Plato. Remember that you are speaking to a sophist. Your imagery moves me not, and your inference is beside the question we discuss. Take me not to your desolate island, but come with me to smiling lands, where fruit and flowers flourish under the fostering hand of man. There I will show you what atoms can do. Regard with me the animals on land, or the fishes in the sea, and learn the constructive powers of atoms. Or look into the heavens, where bodies are moving harmoniously and without collision, or over the sea, when the tides ebb and flow, and you will find atoms everywhere working out a design.”

“But does it not occur to you that you are shifting from the ground which you took at first?”

“I cannot see it,” replied Photius.

“A man of your broad mind cannot of a sudden have lost his mental vision.”

“Explain, Leo; you puzzle me.”

“The atoms you now introduce are not the same as those of Democritus.”

"In what do they differ?"

"In this: that his atoms were supposed to be 'one and self-existent' only, whereas those you now speak of are necessary workers."

"But I made his atoms work as well."

"Gratuitously though, and without proof."

"I fear my mind has become confused."

"It needs not to be: the matter is easily understood."

"How shall I understand it?"

"By going over your thesis, my rejoinder to it, and your answer to me."

"Please do it for me."

"You, with my permission, seized upon the 'one and self-existent' atoms of Democritus, and put them at work to make the world; and from their operations came the heavenly bodies, the earth, and all beings, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational. I objected to your assumptions as contrary to our experience of what atoms like those of Democritus can effect; and I showed that free and unguided atoms do little in the way of construction, but much in the way of destruction. Upon this, you directed my attention to a class of atoms that construct; but they are not the original atoms; they are not the atoms of Democritus, they are not, in a word, free-roving atoms, but atoms working necessarily, and bound to a routine, and set in motion by an invisible hand. The atoms composing the seed must produce the flower, or the shrub, or the tree, but need not and could not do so if they were only indivisible and self-existent!"

"I begin to see my way now," said Photius.

"You have free atoms like our freed-men, that are not bound to work; and enslaved atoms like our slaves, that must obey the master's voice."

"You could not have expressed it more happily, learned and astute Photius—'that must obey the *Master's* voice.'"

"Enough," said Photius. "You know my ways, and that I argue without sincerity, to test the ability of an opponent. Let us have an end to the discussion."

"I am too deeply interested," said Leo, "to conclude so abruptly. The existence of the routine of nature is a convincing proof of the presence of an omnipotent hand. When such an important question as the construction of the universe, and of the laws by which it is governed—which ordain the birth of tree from tree, fish from fish, beast from beast, and man from man; the movements of the heavenly bodies, and the eternal conservation of order in all departments—are being tested by the argument from experience, it is childish to say that the atom, one and self-existent, has done all these things. I don't deny that atoms are actively engaged in all movements, above and below; but they are set going by an invisible agent. And if I might admit that your one and self-existent atom has by accident put in motion one of the machines of the world, common sense makes me deny that it could make this motion an eternal law."

"If even man, who represents the highest form of intelligent life that falls under our observation, were endowed with a million times his native

strength and wit, we could not deem him capable of creating, ordering, and conserving the complicated machinery of the world."

"Exceedingly true," said Photius. "As a matter of course, I agree with you. Do not suspect me to be an unbeliever, or even a philosopher on the old lines. You may hear something of me later that will surprise you ; perhaps that I am bound to be the defender of Christianity instead of its gainsayer. Good-bye, for the present. You have given me a lesson on philosophy that I shall not fail to take to heart ; and I may have to apply what I have learnt in discussion, which I foresee may arise with existing and possible enemies of the Church. Continue your researches, Leo : I may have to ask your aid often when I shall be in a position which the rulers of the State are preparing for me. Adieu."

"What can the man mean ?" said Leo to himself, as he watched the retreating figure of the Secretary.

CHAPTER VII.

A GAY AND BEAUTIFUL CITY.

WITH knitted brow and eyes fixed on the ground, his long robe raised and clutched tightly in his folded arms, Photius trod the busy streets of the Imperial city, making, in his abstraction, a long circuit to reach his home. He stopped at intervals, to speak almost audibly to himself; and he even raised his hand mechanically to enforce a point or to conclude an argument. He was, for the time, unconscious of the sights of the capital, which was, in its material aspect as well as in respect of the characteristics of its inhabitants, one of the most interesting cities the world has ever produced.

Constantinople was in the ninth century an agreeable place to live in for the loungers or men of wealth and fashion; it was under some aspects not unlike living in the Rome of the Cæsars. He went to the public baths to luxuriate in douches, plunges, or hot air for hours, and to lounge about their spacious waiting-rooms, chatting with his friends and discussing the news of the day. Or, he was off to the amphitheatre, to witness a combat of wild beasts; or to the hippodrome, to see the best horses of the city put on their mettle. If he was a landsman, pure and simple, he had squares surrounded by porticoes and shady gardens for his daily stroll; if of aquatic tendencies, he had one of

the most delightful estuaries in the world at hand, with craft of all sizes to carry him through the shipping of the Golden Horn, or up the Bosphorus towards the Euxine Sea, or across the Propontis and through the Archipelago to visit the far-famed Isles of Greece.

A citizen of Old Rome, walking up the Via Sacra, in the days of Augustus, was not much more dazzled by surrounding objects, temples, basilicas, triumphal arches, and the Capitol's towering front, than a denizen of Constantinople in A.D. 861, crossing the market-place of Augustus, with its porticoes on every side filled with statuary, its Senatorial and Imperial palaces, and St. Sophia in the distance, keeping guard over the Christian city.

Besides being named the City of Constantine, the Eastern capital had received the name "New Rome," from its founder—a suitable one in many respects. For it was built on seven hills, divided into fourteen regions, similarly laid out in streets and open spaces, governed by the same municipal laws, and adorned with public buildings like those of the older Imperial city. It had, like Rome, a Capitol; a Prætorium, for the administration of justice; basilicas, for public meetings; aqueducts, public fountains, granaries, and two Imperial palaces. The houses of its nobles were as imposing as those of the Roman patricians, while its churches rivalled in architecture and excelled in decoration the pagan temples of Rome.

Stamboul, the modern city that has taken its place, gives but a faint idea of the Constantinople

of the ninth century. The Bosphorus is still there in all its mirrored loveliness; the banks of that charming estuary are still clad in a vesture of attractive and variegated hues; the air that breathes upon the place is as balmy and fragrant as ever, but the glories of the old Greco-Roman city are gone. For the solid buildings of the ancient city, you have lath and plaster; for the well laid out streets of the Roman surveyor, you have the narrow and filthy lanes of the indolent Turk; for the squares, porticoes, and colonnades of Constantinople, you have only the bazaars of Stamboul; while the great reservoirs are neglected and forgotten, and the fountains play in vain in what has been till lately the dirtiest city in Europe.

Celibate bishops and monks of neighbouring dioceses and monasteries were seen in the streets of this ancient capital; married and unmarried priests lingered about the doors of the churches; nuns with downcast eyes went to and fro on their missions of piety and charity; slaves, with panniers on their heads, trotted along with the contented air of men who knew that they were brothers in the Faith. Now one met the "guardian" of the region, a man of mark, moving gravely upon his beat, followed by his "man of all work"; now a body of night watchmen, returning to their homes after having walked and guarded the streets of their districts during the long hours of the previous night; now a party of firemen, hurrying along to grapple with a conflagration which has broken out in some part of the city. Down by the river were sailors from the Euxine, from the Ægean Sea,

from the Mediterranean, in curious and diversified costumes, representing all the countries that had dealings with this emporium ; and along the walls were the soldiers of the Empire, keeping guard day and night against all foes from outside, and particularly the ever advancing Arabians.

The animation of the scene was increased by a hum of industry on all sides. Here were fullers, carding and cleansing their stuffs ; there were bakers and butchers, preparing and cutting up the food of the people ; the hand factories of that day were at work, some of them in the production of silk materials, others in the elaboration of statues ; boat-builders and stone-dressers added to the din, and on every side shopkeepers chatted and bargained with their customers.

Such was Constantinople in A.D. 860 ; such its buildings, its inhabitants, its pleasures, and occupations. The routine of its daily life was not so strikingly different from that of other great cities of ancient and modern times as to elicit from us more than ordinary expressions of admiration for its ways ; but, at the time of which we write, scenes were occasionally witnessed in its streets and forums which were unique, and some of them of a thrilling and saddening character.

A girl of distinguished appearance and bearing, followed by two female slaves, was loitering under one of the porticoes of the forum named after Augustus, when an elderly patrician, driving by in his chariot, and recognising her as an acquaintance, alighted, and, approaching her respectfully, saluted her. They were entering on what promised

to be a lively conversation, when musical sounds of a curious kind, accompanied by jeering cries and laughter, came up from the direction of the Imperial Palace. Their conversation dropped ; they listened, and looked in the direction whence the sounds came : presently they saw a double line of people approaching in processional order.

At their head rode a stunted figure of ungainly shape and grim visage, grinning hideously and gesticulating wildly, muttering sometimes in a low tone, and then breaking out into a hoarse laugh, or stopping to address some ribald words to his followers, words which were answered by coarse rejoinders all along the line. To their intense dismay and horror, they perceived that this creature was clothed in the sacred vestments of a bishop of the highest rank.

“What can this mean ?” said the lady. “It suggests a procession of lunatics.”

“It means profanity,” said the patrician. “It must be the turn-out of the Emperor’s mock bishops with which we have been for some time threatened.”

“And this wretched being that leads them ?”

“Is Gryllus, the buffoon—the Emperor’s Patriarch of Constantinople.”

Slowly the processionists drew near, and as they passed the two spectators were able to have a perfect view of them. After Gryllus, who was mounted on an ass, came metropolitans similarly mounted ; and after them the bishops dependent on Constantinople. All were dressed in the garb of the sanctuary, but their sodden faces and dissipated manners showed them to be profane jesters, hired to bring religion into contempt.

"It is shocking," said the lady ; "nor would the Saracens, I think, the enemies of our Faith, devise so sacrilegious a method of showing their hatred of it."

"Their hostility would be more open and manly. But, look!" said he. "You have not seen all yet." And he pointed to a number of shameless fellows hovering upon the outskirts of the *cortège*, who were in the garb of priests, and carried cups of gold in their hands, out of which they gave a mixture to the crowd to drink: this must have been of a very pungent character, such as vinegar and mustard, for those who partook of it went away coughing, sneezing, and almost suffocated by the dose.

"You don't realise the meaning of this ceremony," said the patrician.

"How should I?"

"Its enormity is Satanic."

"I cannot see it in other than a grotesque light."

"Have you not seen these cups of gold in another place?"

"What! not the chalices used in the Liturgy?"

"Yes; and the distribution from them is obviously in mockery of the distribution of the Consecrated Elements."

The music rose at this moment louder than before. It was a strange chant: the strains of the solemn Gregorian were mingled with lascivious ditties; and even the tones of the sacred orator were imitated and reproduced, blended with groans and shrieks and dismal howlings.

Melanus and Alethea could bear this din no

longer. They turned away, conversing gravely, and walked towards the river, but by a route that would by a long circuit lead them to the Patriarchal Palace.

We should have refrained from bringing this picture of profanity before our readers, if it were not a true representation. Such a show has never been presented in any Christian city but Constantinople; nor in that city, though it had many strange processions passing through its streets in the days of preceding Emperors, was any spectacle so whimsically impious as this ever seen until the reign of Michael III.

"Has this scene of irreligious licentiousness its origin in whim or intemperance?" demanded Alethea, continuing the conversation.

"In neither," said Melanus, "in my opinion, but in premeditated design."

"Is our Emperor capable of design in anything?"

"He is, I assure you, clever enough when he concentrates his thoughts."

"What design could he have in this?"

"To render the people callous, indifferent, and irreligious. He is, as you must know, bent on chasing the Patriarch from the city. A religious people would resent his removal, perhaps rise in revolt against its author. A people without religion will see the act done without emotion."

"Will Ignatius, think you, be soon driven from his See?"

"This very night he will be arrested."

"And imprisoned?" said she, manifesting much concern.

"Carried off a prisoner from the city."

"Whither will they carry him?"

"To the island of Terebintus."

"Then may I go to the Patriarchal Palace to warn the Bishop of his impending doom?"

"I shall be glad if you do," said he; "and fail not to tell him that he has my sympathy in his trials."

Alethea left him and sped on her errand of kindness, and the patrician was retracing his steps to the place where he had left his chariot when he met another cavalcade, coming up from the port of the Golden Horn. It was of quite a different character, being composed of troops and prisoners.

The Russes, who were regarded as a new tribe of Scythians, and the most cruel of them all, had of late appeared near the entrance of the Euxine. They had pillaged the country, had put to death such of its inhabitants as fell into their hands, and extended their devastations nearly to the gates of Constantinople. A few days before they had made a descent on a monastery, and put all its occupants to the sword; but, being surrounded by the Imperial troops as they were about to set out for home with their plunder, they had been defeated, and were at this moment being paraded through the streets of the capital before being hacked to pieces for their crimes.

Melanus looked compassionately at their desperate and sullen faces. Their heads were bent; they cast furtive glances about them, half timid, half defiant. Their conical caps, their long unkempt hair, their narrow tunics and bare legs, gave them

an outlandish appearance ; and the crowd gave way with a certain timidity, although they were chained hand to hand, and hemmed in by troops on horse-back and on foot.

We leave Melanus gazing at them, as they went by, and follow a line of streets that leads to the Forum of Constantine, where there meets our view another spectacle for which, in the Constantinople of the ninth century, we should hardly be prepared—an auction of slaves. Constantinople had many slaves at that time ; nor was there any household of importance without them. They were for the most part Christians, and as such met with much consideration in the Christian city ; notwithstanding which, they had sometimes to submit to the most painful circumstance of slavery—to be put up to public competition, and given over to the highest bidder, without regard to his condition or character.

At this time, while Melanus and Alethea were conversing under the porticoes, a notable sale of these poor dependents was taking place. Men and women had passed under the hammer, all of the former in the prime of life, and all the latter of mature years, with the exception of one fair girl, who had not yet seen her twentieth summer. This auction was conducted on strict business lines, which is to say that every effort was made to realise the full value of every lot put up. Accordingly, while the day was young and the buyers numerous, the least attractive of the living goods were brought forth ; while the ablest of the men, and, above all, the girl, were held in reserve for the

end, when the bidders would be comparatively few, but of a class that would pay a high price for such articles.

We enter the forum as the reserved lots are being sold, and we see them all disposed of with the exception of the girl, who is kept for the last.

The attendance has now thinned down to about twenty persons, among whom are some gay young men, a few ancient *roués*, and three or four frowsy women, of dissipated appearance, with red and sodden faces.

The girl, who looks quite angelic amid such surroundings, is put forward, and there begins a brisk and lively competition for her.

"Young and healthy," cried the auctioneer. "Look at her ; is she not beautiful ? Look up, girl ; don't keep your eyes fixed on the ground. See," said he, chucking her under the chin, "such lovely eyes ! Such perfect teeth ! Such wavy hair ! Such a fresh complexion ! Such a graceful figure ! She is surely worth one hundred golden imperials. Who bids for this lot ; the best that has been offered to-day ?"

"Five golden Cretan crowns," said a brazen-faced woman.

"And two imperials in addition," said a wild young rake.

"If this is the best you can do," said the auctioneer, "I shall withdraw the lot. Say ten Cretans to begin."

"Ten Cretans," assented a repulsive-looking patrician, who stood apart from the crowd.

"Eleven," cried one of the women.

"Thirteen -- fifteen -- seventeen," pursued the patrician.

The auctioneer was upon the point of knocking down the goods to him at this figure, when Theophylact strode into the forum, and seeing a number of people collected and vociferating around an auctioneer, walked towards them and began to watch the proceedings.

The frightened girl turned her glance upon the new-comer, and gazed at him with an expression which thrilled him to the soul.

Touched by that mute appeal, he asked the auctioneer, "How much has been bid for this girl?"

And he added rapidly and with spirit: "It is shameful to put her up to public competition. Fear not child," he said in an undertone, "you shall not fall into unkind hands while a soldier has a golden crown to save you. I am not rich, but my sword and helmet shall go to the auctioneer first. Seventeen Cretan crowns have been bid for the girl, you say? I offer eighteen—twenty."

"Any advance on twenty?" asked the auctioneer, with his eye upon the patrician.

"No, no," said the patrician. "The Turmarch gets the girl for his offer of twenty; and it is far over her value. I congratulate you, Theophylact," he added in a low tone, "on doing the moral and Christian thing. You forestalled me, for I was only endeavouring to get the girl away from these profligates. I thank you for sparing my purse. Come with me; my house is near, and we will have some wine to restore us after this excitement."

At this moment the slave rushed forward, and throwing herself at the feet of her deliverer burst into tears. She clung to his knees and endeavoured to express her gratitude in words broken by sobs ; but the Turmarch had returned to his usual calm and self-possessed manner, and raising her from the ground, he said, in a cheery tone :

“ Don’t distress yourself, little one. There is no call for thanks. You are worth twenty times your purchase-money. Go to the house of the Turmarch Theophylact, near the gate of Adrianople, and my old nurse Priscilla will take care of you.”

Having said these kind words, Theophylact turned away to accompany the patrician Agrestes to his house, though with some reluctance ; for which, indeed, there was better reason than he knew. For this man was a tool in the hands of Bardas Cæsar, a creature without conscience, prepared to carry out his orders, whatever they might be, and to interpret them in the worst sense.

A few days before his interview with Theophylact, in the market-place, he had been to the Cæsar’s Palace, where he received an order to “look after” Theophylact. The expression by itself might mean no more than a prying supervision of the Turmarch’s words or conduct. But the Cæsar at the same time told him to order Theophylact, in his name, to take a few soldiers with him to the Patriarchal Palace, and put Ignatius under arrest.

Agrestes easily understood the relation of these two commands with each other. Should the Turmarch, as was likely, rebel against the order to

arrest the Patriarch, a treacherous attempt was to be made on his life. So when Agrestes had him alone, he said to him, in an airy way :

"We are well met to-day ; I have been seeking you for some time. I am an envoy to convey to you an order from Bardas Cæsar."

"I should have thought that the Cæsar, if he had aught to say to me, would call me to his Palace and say it there."

"No, for there are decencies to be observed, and no suspicion is to be raised."

"It must be something immoral."

"You will probably think it so."

"Don't keep me in suspense. What is the order ?"

"That you put Ignatius under arrest."

"For what crime, pray ?"

"How am I to know ?"

"You might have asked on what grounds."

"I thought it more prudent to refrain."

"I must be informed of the reason for so grave a step as the arrest of the Patriarch of Constantinople—of the charge against him, and of his guilt—before I move in the matter."

"No time for inquiry now ; the arrest must be made this night."

"Then I refuse to make it. I divine the cause of this profane project : Ignatius has brought the Cæsar to task publicly for his open sin ; the Cæsar will have his revenge. The Patriarch must go from his throne, and the man who saved him from the assassin's sword must be the one to remove him. My soul recoils from a share in such wicked-

ness. Tell the Cæsar that Theophylact refuses to lay hands on the sacred person of a bishop and prince of the Church."

"We will not quarrel about it. I have given my orders ; whether you obey them or not, we are not the less friends. Enter the house and let us drink."

Theophylact passed in without suspicion, and drank a goblet of wine that was offered to him by a slave. His host then himself brought in two glasses already filled, and offered one of them to the soldier.

"You have drank but little," said the patrician. "Here is a vintage I can recommend."

A sudden suspicion flashed across the mind of Theophylact, and he said with civility :

"I have drunk enough ; I go on business of importance. Good evening."

And, without waiting to hear a reply, he walked out of the house.

Theophylact went in the direction of the Patriarchal Palace. Near it he met Photius, who, in his apparently aimless round, was passing that way for the purpose of discovering whether Ignatius was at home, and whether, perchance, there were signs of watchfulness and alarm among the slaves who guarded the Palace. Photius raised his eyes from the ground on hearing the approaching footsteps, and, seeing Theophylact before him, said in his blindest tones :

"What a docile son of the Church ! You go to the Patriarch ? He is, no doubt, at home. I would enter with you to pay my respects to the

holy man ; but, as is my wont, I am sadly pre-occupied with the cares of this passing existence. Good-bye."

Theophylact stopped to look after the retiring figure, and muttered between his teeth, "Hypocrite!"

CHAPTER VIII.

A MEETING IN THE PATRIARCHAL PALACE.

ONE remark made by Photius, in conversing with his ward, had become a source of anxious thought to the girl. He had said : " His friends will induce the Patriarch to resign his See ; if he refuses to accede to their wishes, pressure will be put upon him." She was bewildered as she turned these words over in her mind. What friends, thought she, would be so false as to conspire with his enemies in endeavouring to persuade him to abandon his high position ? What punishment would be inflicted upon him if he refused to retire ? She could not doubt that a dark plot was covered by these sentences, and her warm heart urged her to look about for some means by which she might counteract it.

She had venerated Ignatius from her childhood, and loved him as her spiritual father when she grew up. She had seen in his mode of acting everything that was high-minded, conscientious, and honourable. She could worship him for his bold defence of the helpless Theodora and her daughters. " If he be taken from us," she thought, " the great bulwark against the scandals of the Court will have fallen." And these reflections led her into the consideration of various plans for the defence of the Patriarch. Whether to go straight to the Emperor, and ask him to protect Ignatius ; or to

call upon Bardas Cæsar, and beseech him to detach himself from Photius' irreligious schemes? Should she ask the advice of the patrician Melanus? For though at that time he had no influence with the Emperor, in consequence of his religious attitude, he was still a power in the city. She even, for a moment, thought of appealing to the strong arm of the Turmarch, who had so manfully confronted and subdued the despot in the Church of St. Sophia.

Having reflected upon the merits of these plans, she finally determined to put them all aside. She would go herself to the Patriarch, and make known to him the designs of his enemies. But she would not have carried out this determination so promptly but for the information received from Melanus. Now she hurried to the door of the Patriarchal Palace, and inquired for Ignatius. He received her with much fatherly affection, and heard from her, with great surprise, the matter of her conversation with Photius. They were still discussing the motives and methods of the conspiracy, when a slave entered the room, and announced that an officer was waiting to speak to the Patriarch "on important and urgent business."

Ignatius excused himself, and went out to meet this new caller, whom he found to be the Turmarch Theophylact. It was on his way to the Patriarchal Palace that, in passing through the Forum of Constantine, he had witnessed and taken part in the sale of the young slave.

"I have come," said the officer, "at this late hour, to warn you of impending danger. You will, unless you fly, be arrested this night, and conveyed

secretly out of the city to some distant prison. An officer of the Household and his men are, perhaps, even now, on the way hither."

"A like story has been just told me by a lady of high rank, who is in the Palace. Enter, that we may discuss with her the means of meeting this strange aggression."

Theophylact, passing through the great hall, entered a room in the back part of the building. Here Ignatius presented him to Alethea, who received him in a gracious manner.

"I was asking you, before I was called away, noble lady," said Ignatius, "about the kind of pressure that is to be put upon me, to induce me to resign my charge."

"On this point I can speak with certainty," she replied. "You will be sent into banishment to the island of Terebintus, and you will be urged, when there, by promises and threats, to pronounce sentence of deposition upon yourself."

"It can hardly be so," interposed Theophylact; "for I have been commanded to arrest the Patriarch, an order that would have been given to the Admiral Oriphas, if he were to be carried a prisoner to one of the islands."

A shadow of surprise and sorrow passed over the girl's face, as she asked: "Am I, then, in the presence of my Bishop's jailer?"

"Can you suppose," said he, with dignity, "that I could stoop so low, or degrade the position I hold, by lending it to the support of sacrilegious tyranny?"

"It was thoughtless of me to ask such a question. I am sorry; forgive my hasty speech."

"It is I that should ask forgiveness," he replied, "for I impertinently called in question the accuracy of valuable information which you were giving to the Patriarch."

"My children," said Ignatius, "both of whom are equally dear to me for your zeal in the cause of religious order, both of whose hearts are pure and true, we have but little time for discussion, and none for difference of opinion. Theophylact has been commanded to arrest me by one who knew well that he would not do so; and the object of this command was to embarrass and compromise him: while my dear daughter, Alethea, has been endeavouring, in her way, to counteract the plots of my enemies. I hear from one of you that I am to be arrested this night; from the other that I am to be carried away to Terebintus. Be it so; I resign myself to the decrees of Providence. I shall not fly; I shall offer no opposition. Let my sufferings begin at once. My life may be sacrificed before they end; but for no consideration will I yield any principle of faith, Church discipline, or morals."

He had scarcely ceased to speak when a clatter of soldiers was heard in the hall without, and a moment afterwards an officer of the Household, followed by his men, entered the room. He was advancing to lay violent hands on Ignatius, when, seeing Theophylact, his superior officer, he stopped short, and said: "I arrest you, Patriarch, by order of the Emperor."

"I command you," said Theophylact, "to carry out your orders, and treat this distinguished eccle-

siastic, with humanity and moderation ; and I warn you that if there be any violence in your mode of acting, such as you were disposed to exercise when you entered this apartment, you will answer for it. Now you can withdraw your party to the court without, and I will hold myself responsible for the custody of your prisoner for such time as he may require to make the necessary preparations for his departure."

Theophylact and Alethea, left alone for the moment, entered into conversation on the subject that was engrossing their thoughts at the time, and talked without reserve, and even with animation, on the tyranny of their rulers.

"Think you, Turmarch," said Alethea, "that the arrest of the Patriarch, when it becomes known outside the circle of the conspirators who have caused it, will stir the masses into revolt against the civil power?"

"There will be no revolt," said Theophylact decisively, nor even disturbance of public order ; though I expect signs of a sullen discontent on the part of the people."

"By the people you understand, I presume, the lower and dependent classes, who are, as every one knows, more pious and zealous than the nobles."

"I apply the word, Madam, to the freedmen, plebeians, and slaves primarily ; but I do not exclude the patricians, among whom Ignatius has some warm friends."

"The Bishops of the Province, the secular clergy, and the monks, will be, I surmise, faithful to their spiritual head?"

"Most of them, assuredly ; but not a few will be won over by the wiles of the intriguer who will supersede him."

"Photius is my near relative," said Alethea, with some feeling.

"Do you object, Madam, to the word by which I have characterised him?"

"I should not," said Alethea, "because it has not been used in malice, and has been justified in some measure by his recent acts. Still it pains me to hear it applied to him, because he has been my life-long friend, and the director of my steps since early girlhood. I have remonstrated with him on his ambition and unkindness to Ignatius, and shall do so again and again. I may be the instrument destined to turn him from these dreadful designs."

"So may it be. He will be hard-hearted indeed if he makes light of the pleading of an advocate so disinterested and persuasive."

Alethea remained silent for a few minutes, and then said pointedly, looking straight into the face of the soldier : "Turmarch, have you been threatened with the Cæsar's wrath, or in any way molested for your bold action in St. Sophia?"

"I have heard no more of the matter to this day."

"Then you have been forgiven by the Cæsar?"

"I believe not."

"At least, you will suffer no penalty?"

"I cannot say."

"Why should the Cæsar remain silent and inactive so long, if he meditates thoughts of revenge?"

"Because, perhaps, he deems it prudent to wait the subsidence of the wave of anger that he raised in the church. Possibly, too, he fears the displeasure of the Byzantine nobility, who are associated with me in command of the heavy horse."

"How dreadful it would be," said she, as if simply following a sentiment of concern that passed through her mind, "if dark designs were being matured against the life of a brave and guiltless man, who may not be attacked in broad daylight."

Ignatius' return at this time put an end to the conversation at the moment, when Alethea began to feel slightly embarrassed at the thought of the words she had unwittingly dropped. She had returned compliment for compliment to the soldier; nor did she regret it: in future she might meet him with the less restraint.

The Patriarch presently returned in travelling dress, and, as far as could be judged from his appearance, prepared for a long journey; but his countenance bore an expression of care and sadness.

"I do not know," he said, "why I am put under arrest: I have injured no one; I have broken no law; I have acted loyally towards the Civil Government."

"Patriarch," said Theophylact impetuously, "you have loved justice and hated iniquity, and for this reason you are persecuted by impious men. I could," he continued passionately, putting his hand on his sword, "as it seems to me, without a violation of my duty as a soldier, defend you against

this aggression. Speak the word, and what one man can do, I will do this night, to protect you and avert this wrong."

"Patience, my son," said Ignatius ; " Providence will protect me, and bring me alive out of the fiery furnace. My cause is the cause of a weak man fighting against the strong for justice' sake ; and St. Michael shall be on my side. Now I am prepared to go and put myself between the hands of the officer without, who will treat me the more gently for the words you have addressed to him." He blessed them and went out.

Alethea, bidding a hurried good-bye to Theophylact, put herself into the hands of her slaves who were in waiting, while the Turmarch, in an abstracted mood, wandered slowly along the dark and solitary street that led to the Church of St. Mocus. His mind dwelt much upon the memory of the fair maiden met to-day for the first time, upon her words, and the concern she manifested for his safety. Her distinction and dignity, her natural and frank expression of feeling, the beauty of her face and figure, occupied his thoughts. Yet, when presently he found himself in the shadow of St. Mocus' Church, he shuddered with a presage of evil, and drawing his cloak about him quickened his steps towards home.

On entering the porch of his house, he was presented by the door-keeper with a letter, which had been brought to the house some hours before by a strange slave. Theophylact opened it and read as follows :

" The writer of these lines has seen you twice, in

a dream, pierced with arrows like St. Sebastian ; then rising from death and confronting your enemies like the martyred Roman tribune. Be on your guard, for your enemies seek to remove you ; and if they cannot do so openly, they will not hesitate to employ secret and treacherous methods."

He slowly folded the brief epistle, and while he sought to divine its origin, his thoughts returned to the fair girl from whom he had lately parted.

"Alethea?"

CHAPTER IX.

TEREBINTUS.

IGNATIUS was a son of the deposed Emperor Michael Rangabus. He had in him a second strain of Royal blood from his mother Precopia, who was daughter of the Emperor Nicephorus. There was no guilt in the man, nor the suspicion of a crime, neither did his greatest enemies ever make a charge of any personal fault against him.

The wonder is that such as he, inoffensive and wholly given to the duties of his office, should have found anyone to cross his path or give him pain. Yet from his youth he was the victim of unrelenting enmity. His sufferings began when he was a boy : he was sent into banishment in the fourteenth year of his age by the Emperor Leo the Isaurian, and remained outside the City of Constantinople till the year 847, when he was chosen, out of many candidates, to fill the Patriarchal chair. For this high office he had fitted himself by a life of toil and self-denial. Years before he had put aside the soft garments of his rank, and put on the coarse habit of a monk ; and so faithfully had he borne himself in this position that he was, on the death of the Abbot of his monastery, chosen to fill his place. Thence his fame went abroad in every direction, for he built many monasteries, and devoted his days to the instruction of the ignorant and the relief of the poor and afflicted. His ample

patrimony was expended in the promotion of charitable works, and his name became a tower of strength against the snares and assaults of the Iconoclasts.

With such an origin and such a personal record, Ignatius was no ordinary obstacle to the irreligious whims and scandalous life of the Emperor Michael and his uncle; and hence they came into collision with him on many occasions. Among the demands that the Emperor made upon his conscience was the monstrous request that he should give the religious habit to his mother Theodora and her daughters, despite their unwillingness to take the religious vows. Ignatius refused to comply, and from that hour the Emperor was his enemy. With Bardas' cause of complaint the reader has already been made acquainted.

If Ignatius had been a weak man he would have been glad to retire from the face of his Imperial persecutors, and to change the unrest of the city for the quiet repose of an island in which he had spent a large part of his early days; but he was a man of strong resolve, and of immense patience and fortitude, so that even Terebintus, whither he was now banished, with its pine forests perfuming the air, and its natural beauties among the Isles of Greece, had no attraction for him in comparison to the toils and trials of the office which he had received from Providence. Its duties he would fulfil, its dignities he would hold tenaciously to the end of his life, or perish.

A few days after the arrival of Ignatius on the island of Terebintus, a number of bishops were

sent by Bardas Cæsar to wait upon him, with the object of inducing him to make a voluntary resignation of the Patriarchal dignity and the See of Constantinople. Long and forcibly with him they argued, endeavouring to impress him with the expediency of such a course in the face of the bitter hostility of the reigning powers to him and their attachment to the cause of Photius. Ignatius listened silently and patiently, and when they had ceased to speak he replied decisively :

“ I am not a man of expediency, but of principle. I will not abandon, for favour or for threats, the charge of the flock over which Providence has set me, nor lay down the dignity that belongs to my office.”

There was no gainsaying this firm and spirited declaration; and the bishops, convinced that nothing was to be gained by argument with so resolute a man, retired from his presence and started at once on their return journey to Constantinople. Having arrived there, they informed Bardas, the Emperor Michael, and Photius, that “ Paul before the Roman governor was not stronger in speech or in resolve than Ignatius.”

“ You shall try again,” said Bardas, when he had heard them out; and his words were echoed by Michael and Photius. “ Go again to Terebintus, but I will not send you this time alone. You shall have judges and patricians to accompany you; and I promise you that this contentious Bishop shall yield and bend his obstinate head.”

This second deputation, like the first, was received by the Patriarch with quiet and resolute

dignity ; but the arguments of its members failed to win his consent. They were commissioned to offer him easy and honourable terms, they said. Wealth should be his, and the favour of the Court ; abbatial rank of the first order would be allowed him ; personal liberty and the right to travel from place to place, if he would only say that he was done with the Patriarchate. But if he should refuse to make the concession demanded, imprisonment would be his portion, involving separation from his friends, with the accompanying horrors which unscrupulous jailers might add to the negative pains of incarceration.

“ Tell your friends and those who sent you,” he answered, “ that I am to be moved neither by promises nor by threats. It would ill become my grey hairs to turn by my bad example the little ones of the flock from the path of duty : and I am no hireling shepherd, to flee at a hint of danger. Tortures and death I will meet as I may, without fear, as becomes the Patriarch of the New Rome.”

Meanwhile, events had been advancing with great rapidity in the capital. Scarcely had the Patriarch departed from the city, when Photius proceeded to carry into execution the plan he had decided upon for the purpose of inducing the Bishops of the Province to consent to his election. He signed the document put before him by these dignitaries, promising thereby to honour the Patriarch Ignatius, to look up to him as his father, to continue in his communion, and to perform no episcopal act without his consent. On these conditions he received episcopal orders at the hands

of Gregory of Syracuse. From a layman he was made bishop within a week : on the first day he took the vows of a monk ; on the second he received the minor orders ; on the third the subdiaconate ; on the fourth the diaconate ; on the fifth the priesthood ; and, finally, on the sixth day he was consecrated a bishop.

His consecration over, Photius at once took possession of the Episcopal throne and the Palace : and then, with the Emperor and the Cæsar, began to persecute Ignatius. He is credited with having persuaded Bardas, and, through him, the Emperor Michael, to institute a charge of treason against the Patriarch ; and he it was who induced them to send magistrates to Terebintus, for the purpose of collecting information in support of this charge. Evidence of his guilt, though sought for on every side, was not forthcoming : his slaves were put to the torture for the purpose of compelling them to testify against him ; attempts were made to suborn witnesses ; but all efforts of his enemies failed to throw even a doubt on the loyalty of the exiled prelate.

Then the fury of Photius and his Imperial supporters broke all the bounds of reserve and decency. They sent soldiers to Terebintus, with orders to seize upon the person of Ignatius, and to carry him a prisoner to the island of Hierus. There he was rigorously confined in a stable which had been long used as a shelter for goats. From this filthy den he was, after a few weeks, transferred to a suburb of Constantinople, named Promettus, where he was thrust into a narrow

prison, and placed in irons under the care of a ferocious jailer.

Alethea, hearing that her venerated friend and father had come back to the neighbourhood of the city, sought permission to visit him in prison. This privilege was grudgingly allowed, the duration of her visit being limited to a few minutes. On arriving at Promettus she was roughly received by the officer in charge, Leo Lalacus, who asked her brutally if she were going to visit the "old reprobate."

She replied with spirit: "I am come to visit a holy man, a Prince of the Empire and of the Church."

With a coarse sneer on his face he bade her pass in.

She found the Patriarch in a deplorable state. He had been struck in the face by Lalacus a few minutes before her arrival, and two of his front teeth had been driven in by the violence of the blow. She would not have known of this violence, for Ignatius was silent on the subject, but for a servant in attendance, who said: "This is the work of that savage officer outside."

Alethea, girl as she was, could not restrain her indignation. In a moment she turned, and confronting Lalacus, exclaimed: "You wicked man! You have sacrilegiously assaulted the Bishop. Pray what has he done to justify this treatment?"

"I am not responsible to you for my acts," he replied sternly. "Pass on."

"I will not go," said she, "until you have an-

swered my question. Have you been commissioned to strike an old and defenceless bishop?"

"Away!" he growled, "or I stretch my commission to a point that will astonish you." And, as he spoke, he laid his hand rudely on the girl's shoulder. But unobserved by him, a muffled figure had entered through the door, which he had left open behind him; and as his hand touched the lady, a blow from a muscular arm caused him to measure his length upon the unclean pavement. "The same brute as ever, Lalacus," exclaimed a disdainful voice.

The prostrate man glared at his assailant for a moment; but recognising in the towering form a superior officer, gathered himself up, and slunk shamefully away, with an expression of intense malignity on his ill-favoured countenance.

Alethea turned to thank her defender, and her eyes met those of Theophylact. He looked gaunt and haggard; his face was blanched by the excitement of the encounter; his breath came and went with unnatural and distressing rapidity. He was the first to break the somewhat embarrassing silence, and his voice had lost its round and sonorous quality.

"I congratulate myself upon having arrived at an opportune moment."

"Believe me, Sir, I am grateful. But I fear the effort has distressed you: surely you are not yourself?"

"My system has received a severe shock from a drug administered to me by a treacherous friend under a show of hospitality."

"I had reason to fear," said she, "that some such attempt would be made upon you: you should not have disdained my warning."

"Then it was yours!" he exclaimed with momentary brightening; and then continued: "But it came too late."

"May I ask," said she with undisguised concern, "what antidote you have used, or what agent have you employed to counteract its effect?"

"None whatever," said Theophylact. I have trusted to the strength of my constitution. I believed myself capable of shaking off any disease that might assail me; but now I am tempted to fear that my strong frame has supplied more abundant fuel to the fiery drug."

"But you will not die?" she exclaimed quickly; "nay, you shall not die," she added with emotion. "I cannot, indeed, be your nurse; but I will be your physician. Go home now, and take the potion I shall send you according to the accompanying directions. And I believe," she added, "that, by the blessing of God, you will ere long be completely recovered."

"A happy prediction," said he, "and from a well-omened source. I will fulfil your commands to the letter." And upon that they separated.

Alethea, returning through the city, was swayed by various emotions. Compassion for Ignatius in his trials, and indignation at the conduct of his jailer were prominent in her soul; but her chief anxiety (if she had known it) was for the fate of Theophylact, whose changed appearance had shocked her, though the news of the attempt upon his life came hardly as a surprise.

As she passed along the street of Adrianople the noise of passing chariots and the din of voices on every side bewildered her ; and it was with a sense of relief that she found herself beneath the walls of the Church of the Twelve Apostles : an oasis of repose in the midst of the turmoil of the city. She entered the enclosure, a large square surrounded by galleries, assembly rooms, and the residences of the clergy and church officials ; and the restfulness of the place fell upon her like a spell, as she threaded her way among the tombs which filled the central portion of the open space, and even showed a tendency to encroach upon the footpaths which surrounded and intersected it. In the midst towered the tomb of the great founder of the city, Constantine, and around it were twelve tombs dedicated to the Twelve Apostles, all venerable from age, and showing traces of an alien architecture. From these she turned to inspect the tombs of more recent Emperors. There lay side by side the Iconoclast, the Monotholite, and the Saint ; the worthless Copronimus, the furious Zeno, the ignorant Leo, the learned Justinian ; their Empresses, too, of divers fame.

Before her lay the magnificent church, with its lofty dome ; sides perforated by graceful windows of characteristic shape, and its roof covered with plates of brass. Built in the form of a cross, and covering a wide area, it was at once impressive and devotional.

Filled with the sentiment of the place, Alethea approached the open door and crossed the threshold. Having kissed the Book of the Gospel and

the relics that were laid on a table in the porch, she passed into the nave and began reverently to inspect the objects of interest that surrounded her.

Ranged along the walls stood or knelt statues of saints and angels, some in marble, others in highly decorated wood, and a third and small class in bronze or other metal. Among these, at intervals, were pictures of sacred personages, a little angular in outline, but manifesting none the less a high degree of inspiration, upon backgrounds of dull gold. Beneath her feet was a tessellated floor of noble design. The walls of the basilica were of costly marble; the roof shone with glittering mosaics.

Alethea reverently approached the Sanctuary, and gazed for a moment through its golden doors, which were parted, at the altar and its surroundings, where all the riches of the church appeared to centre. Then she sank upon her knees, and prayed with earnest faith for peace upon the Church and for the amendment of evil doers.

She was not alone in her devotions. Towards her right hand, partially concealed by a pillar, knelt another woman's form, which had escaped her notice in her survey of the building; if, indeed, she had not mistaken it for one of the statues which decorated the interior: so motionless and silent was it. The rustling of a woman's garments momentarily disturbed her devotions, as the figure stirred, about to depart; and looking up, she beheld a young girl in the act of swathing her head in the folds of a loose mantle. The glance showed a face

indicative of extraordinary sweetness and intelligence. Alethea followed the receding figure with a steady and searching gaze. Who could this slave be, so lovely, so far superior to others of the same class? Moved by an unreasoning curiosity, she signalled to a deaconess whom she had seen entering the Sanctuary a few minutes before, and on her approach, inquired : " Can you tell me anything of the slave who has just left the church ? "

" Who does not know her," answered the deaconess, " of those who frequent this church ? With her garment of bondage, she is free as air. She comes from the house of a noble soldier, where there is neither bond nor free."

" His name ? " Alethea asked. But the answer was superfluous.

" Theophylact."

CHAPTER X.

A HOT-BED OF HERESIES—A WEAK SISTER IN THE FAITH.

THOUGH there had been none but Andrimades to scatter broadcast through the city an account of the doings of Photius, Bardas Cæsar, and the Emperor Michael, and of the wrongs that the Patriarch Ignatius had suffered at their hands, the tale would have been quickly spread ; for this strange man made it the subject of his daily talk, at the baths, in the hippodrome, and on the public promenades. He enlarged upon the craft and hypocrisy of Photius, the malice of Bardas Cæsar ; and though he spoke of the Emperor with bated breath, he, nevertheless, bruited it among his intimates that Michael was verging towards imbecility.

And though Andrimades was constitutionally unable fully to realise the grossness of the treatment to which Ignatius had been subjected, he, nevertheless, held him up to his listeners, to use his own words, as “an angel surrounded by demons.”

But the knowledge of recent events was not confined to the circle in which Andrimades moved ; it went out through the city in every direction, and the outrage was a topic of conversation among the industrial and poorer classes, as well as among the rich. How could it be otherwise ? For the vener-

able figure of Ignatius was no longer seen in the pulpit of St. Sophia, and a eunuch of the Court wore the Patriarchal robes, and strutted, in his stolen plumage, through the churches of the city, administering the secret rites of religion, and presiding at its public functions.

The scandal was very great. Good men and holy women deplored it ; but there was no hint of a rising of the people against the perpetrators, nor even any public demonstration of loyalty, on the part of the flock, to the distinguished Bishop who had governed it with such zeal and charity for a period of twelve years.

Constantinople, though the air was full of speculative theology, was devoid of zeal for the discipline and the right government of its Church. Nor could it well be otherwise ; for the city had been, at intervals, from its foundation a hot-bed for the production of heresies, or a nursery into which they had been transplanted from other and more remote centres of the East. The heresies of Arius, of Macedonius, of Nestorius, of Eutychius, the Monothelite and Iconoclastic fantasies had in succession been taught from its pulpits ; weakening and subverting the faith of its inhabitants, and rendering them callous and apathetic in defence of the Orthodox religion.

It was in this city that Arius died, in the hour of his triumph over the Orthodox Christians of the Empire. This reviler of the Divinity of the Saviour, who had been for his impiety driven out of Alexandria, found a home in Constantinople and enjoyed the patronage of its reigning Emperor.

He was on his way to take possession of the Church of the Twelve Apostles, when he was suddenly called out of life.

And Arianism was still a great power here, having many and vigorous advocates among both clergy and laity, when a new leader of thought appeared, engrafting on the heresy of his predecessor a new profanity, and leading the distracted people of the place still deeper into the mire of unbelief. This man was named Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople from the year 341 to the year 360. He impugned the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and held to his error with such tenacity, and taught it with such effrontery during the long period of twenty years, that he detached many from the Faith in the Imperial city and raised the demon of religious strife all over the Empire of the East.

Was there ever a city so perplexed as Constantinople towards the end of the fourth century! Was there ever a people so harassed by irreligious factions! An apostle and a sage named Gregory Nazianzum was raised to its Episcopal chair in the year 381; but such was the confusion all round him, so great was the opposition he met with in the discharge of his functions, that after vainly trying to lull the storm, he rushed before the Emperor of the day, and throwing himself on his knees before him, renounced his pastoral charge, and fled from the city as from a pest-house.

Time went on, but the prospect did not brighten; rather, a deeper darkness seemed to brood over this unhappy Church. Early in the fifth century it was

once more a Bishop of Constantinople who led the revolt against truth ; propounding a doctrine on the Incarnation so subtly false that it still lingers on after a lapse of twelve centuries, and has a substantial following in the East at the present day. The Son of God had been assailed by Arius ; the Holy Ghost had been blasphemed by Macedonius ; now the assault was on the prerogative of the Theotokos. Nestorius was the name of this new heresiarch, and he preached his error with great persistence from the pulpit of St. Sophia ; while by his writings he sowed it broadcast through the Churches of Asia and Africa.

The scandal of the proceedings which we have chronicled was not, as a matter of course, confined to Constantinople ; and, if it had the effect of dimming the zeal and injuring the faith of the inhabitants of the capital city, it must have produced like results in other cities of the Empire. But an epidemic produces its most deadly effects in the largest centre of population.

Nestorianism was followed by Eutychianism. Nestorius had taught his hearers that there are two persons in Christ ; Eutychius profanely said that the human was absorbed by the Divine nature in the God-Man, which was equal to affirming that in the Incarnation the Redeemer had not truly become man. The latter, like the former error, found a home in Constantinople, and was defended and taught by Acacius, who was Patriarch in the year 484. So numerous were the errors in faith and religious practice in Constantinople in A.D. 536 that the Abbots of many

monasteries within and outside the walls of the city wrote a joint letter to the Pope of the day, Agapetus, begging of him to come to the aid of the people of the place, and save them from utter perversion.

So from generation to generation, and even, with certain exceptions, from Patriarch to Patriarch, error, always in some new form, flourished in the City of Constantine, until finally an Emperor, who had won popularity by his successful campaigns against the Saracens, undertook to teach theology to the people, and, in his ignorance, brought fresh confusion into the Christian ranks. This Emperor was Heraclius; the error which he gave to the world was enunciated by him in a circular document known as his *Ecthesis*; and the essence of it was contained in the assertion that "in the God-Man there is but one will."

It was bad enough for the ruler of the State to propound a falsehood; but it was worse when the ruler of the Church set himself to propagate it, as did Sergius, the Patriarch of the day: and not only Sergius, but his successors, Pyrrhus and Paul—the latter even propounded it in a letter written to Theodore, Bishop of Rome.

True to its *rôle* of innovation in religion, Constantinople, through its Emperor, Leo the Isaurian, entered on a campaign against the *icon*, or religious image, in the year 726. The icon was in high favour with the Christians of the Empire. They loved their icons; they decorated them; they gilt them with the brightest gold; they filled their churches with them, and gave them an honoured

place in their homes. They bowed before them, and in their presence meditated on the lives of the holy ones they represented.

A war against the icon was a war against a cherished devotion of the Constantipolitans. When it broke out, dissensions on religious topics had in some measure subsided, and the city was in peace ; but long before it ended the streets were deluged with blood.

In giving this condensed account of the errors which had at different times won acceptance in the capital of the Eastern world, during the centuries that intervened between the death of Constantine the Great and the accession of Michael III., we have had it in view to prepare the reader for scenes that we have yet to depict, as well as partly to account for a state of public opinion which could regard almost with indifference the outrageous events which we have already narrated. Yet it would not be just to assert that Constantinople was at any time a godless place, for it contained within its walls communities of Orthodox monks and nuns, and a large number of devout laity of all ranks ; it was governed by saintly prelates from time to time ; and some of its secular rulers were pious in their lives and zealous promoters of good works. But the city was singularly tried and tempted by the presence of heresiarchs and their followers ; by the false teaching that flowed as a torrent from the pulpit of St. Sophia, and by the defection of many of its bishops from the Orthodox faith ; by the sudden elevation of laymen to the Episcopacy ; and by the coarse,

and sometimes brutal intervention of secular persons, and of the Emperors in particular, in the affairs of the Church.

Photius, who was well versed in history, sacred and profane, knew the shortcomings of the Church of his native city ; and, though perhaps he did not rate it low among the great Churches of Eastern Christendom, or allow it to be inferior to Antioch or Alexandria in respect of faith and morals, he believed it to be a community in which an abrupt and tragic change of Patriarchs would be tolerated, if not welcomed ; and hence he entered on his path of diplomacy with complete assurance of ultimate success. Nevertheless, this intriguer believed that, to ensure his ultimate triumph, and permanently to maintain his possession of the Patriarchal throne, one thing was before all others necessary : the recognition of the Roman Pontiff. Nor need this surprise us, all unaccustomed as we are in our day to see the East do homage to the West ; for Photius was the most learned Canonist of his day, and the most accomplished student of Holy Scripture and the Fathers.

The appeal of Photius to the Pope is a tribute to the supremacy of the Holy See. He was not the man to appeal to Rome if he could have avoided it. He was endowed by nature with a defiant and obstinate disposition. In his researches he must have learned how one of his predecessors in the Patriarchate had set himself up as a rival in rank to the Pope. Why should he not have done the same ? His course was the directly opposite : he petitioned the Pope to confirm him in the See of

Constantinople. It may be worth while to examine this action of the "Luther of the Ninth Century," and to inquire into the motives which prompted it, in the light of the sad history of subsequent centuries during which the Church of Constantinople has followed her own path, unchecked by a superior, an open rebel against the jurisdiction of her elder sister in the Faith.

Was it the religious peace of the Western city that attracted the attention of Photius? Was it the consistency of Rome's teaching? Was it the absence of religious dissension that drew him thither, and the freedom of the people from heresy? Did he believe, perchance, that the Rock was there on which the Church was built?

We cannot bring ourselves to believe that a religious, or even a sympathetic, motive swayed on this occasion the conduct of a man who was always callous and indifferent as to the means he employed, provided they led him to the goal on which avarice or ambition had induced him to fix his mind. No, it was history, and his exceptional knowledge of the story of his Church that forced this learned man to bring his case under the notice of Pope Nicholas I. The circumstances in which he found himself induced him to study with attention the history of the appeals that had been made from time to time by the Church of Constantinople to the Church of Rome. And in pursuing this study, he found that Emperors of the East had addressed the Pope in favour of tottering Patriarchs; that Patriarchs on the throne had appealed to be confirmed; that Patriarchs in exile had appealed

to be restored by the Pope ; that Orthodox Patriarchs had deferred to the Pope, and that heterodox Patriarchs had followed their example. Moreover, there were cases in which, Patriarchs of the Eastern capital having declined to appeal to Rome, the Roman Pontiff had deposed them and appointed others to occupy their place.

What should he do but what others had done before him who were, from one cause or another, in doubt or difficulty as to the security of their tenure of the Patriarchal chair ? The precedents recorded by history filled his mind with alternating hope and fear. Turning over his parchment roll, his eyes fell on an appeal that was made to Rome in the reign of Theodosius the Younger. He read it attentively, and was much consoled by its perusal. At that time Nectarius was Patriarch. His appointment had been very irregular. A layman and unbaptised, he was nominated to the See by the Emperor : and he still wore the white robe of a neophyte when he was elected to it by the Bishops of the Province. Public feeling was, as a matter of course, deeply wounded at the gross violation of the Canons involved in his elevation, and there was a general feeling that an authoritative confirmation of his position was required. The Emperor was the first to move. He organised a deputation composed of Senators and Bishops, and put into their hands some rich presents for the Church of St. Peter ; and then he sent them away to Rome, to represent to Damasus, the Pope of the day, his desire that Nectarius should be by his Apostolic authority confirmed

in the See of Constantinople. The appeal was successful, and Photius applied it thus :

“ I am in a stronger position than Nectarius, and better entitled to a hearing ; for while both of us were laymen when appointed to this See, he laboured under the special disqualification of being unbaptised. Can Nicholas refuse to me what Damasus granted to him ? I, too, with the aid of Bardas, will have a deputation of distinguished men organised ; I will put into their hands rich vestments and vessels of gold for the Church of St. Peter. I will move the Emperor to write a letter in my favour to Nicholas. My envoys being thus equipped, I need not fear an unfavourable hearing.”

Pursuing his investigations he took up another roll, wherein was recorded the visit of Pope Agapetus to Constantinople in the year 536. “ This,” thought he, “ is nearer to our time : here I shall find an illustration of what an Emperor of the East can do at the present day, if it be his object to persuade or coerce the Pope, with a view to the disposal of the Patriarchate.”

Agapetus was invited to the Eastern city, as a physician to a sick man ; for the Church of Constantinople at that time was in a state of utter collapse from the successful action of heretics, and the support they had received in high places. Theodora was the Empress of the hour, and she had in the Patriarch Anthimus a man after her own heart ; for she was of the Monophysite heresy, and the Bishop also, having refused to receive the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon, by which the errors of that

sect were exposed in detail, branded, and anathematised.

Justinian, the reigning Emperor, though not so warm a partisan, was of the same way of thinking as his wife. "Here or never," thought Photius, "shall I find the *principle* of the Pope borne down and over-ridden by the *power* of the Imperial family."

But it was not so ; and Photius, as he continued to read, was both disappointed and discouraged. For Agapetus, in that strange city, far from home, and entirely at the mercy of the Emperor and his wife, was firm, unyielding, and even defiant. He refused to see Anthimus ; he would hold no communication with him : and he told the Emperor very plainly that he did not, and would not, recognise him as Patriarch of Constantinople. In vain Justinian stormed ; in vain Theodora besought : the Pope was inflexible, appeared to gather strength from opposition ; and, in the end, he issued an excommunication against Anthimus—to take effect if he should not at once receive the Acts of the General Council of Chalcedon.

This was too much even for the all-powerful Emperor of the East : it brought Justinian to his knees. He conferred with Theodora ; he consulted his courtiers ; he looked into his conscience ; and, finally, came to the conclusion that there was only one prudent course for him to follow, viz., to sacrifice Anthimus, and to give Agapetus a free hand to regulate the succession to the Patriarchate. The Pope availed himself at once of the concession made by the Emperor, and having selected a

priest named Mennas, he consecrated him Bishop with his own hands. Then, having placed him, with the consent of Theodora and the approval of the Emperor, upon the Patriarchal throne, he departed from the city, amidst the acclamations of the people, and returned to Rome. It was a lesson on spiritual strength and orthodoxy that was long remembered in the East.

This example was anything but pleasing to Photius, and he put the parchment aside with some disgust. Just then his eye fell upon a mere fragment, a letter, which, as it was short, he would glance over. Perhaps it might bear on the subject with which his mind was filled. So it did; but it was quite as disheartening as the record which he had just put down.

It was a letter of Pope Felix to Acacius the Monophysite, Bishop of Constantinople, written towards the end of the fifth century. These were its concluding words: "Cast in your lot, then, with those whom you favour, and know by these presents that you are deprived of the honour of the priesthood and of Catholic communion: being condemned by the judgment of the Holy Spirit and by Apostolic authority, without hope of being relieved from this censure, unless you amend your ways. I, Felix Cœlius, Bishop of the Holy Catholic Church of Rome, have subscribed this decree on the fifteenth day before the Calends of August, in the consulship of Venantius." "These are embarrassing documents," thought he. "They forebode what may come upon me if I proceed not with caution."

He next read an appeal of John Chrysostom to the Pope of his time, in which he besought him to be judge between him and his persecutors when he was far from Constantinople, having being deprived of his See by the machinations of the Empress Eudoxia. The passage was as follows :

“ I, therefore, beseech you to write a letter in which you shall declare all that has been done against me to be null and void, and hold me in your communion as you have heretofore done. For I have been condemned without a hearing, and I am still prepared to prove my innocence before an impartial tribunal.”

“ Ha !” said he, “ if Ignatius should petition in this way ! For his case is not unlike that of John Chrysostom. But I will take good care that he shall not be the first in the field, if he presents himself in any way before the tribunal of Rome.”

So he went over the words and acts of other appellants of Patriarchal dignity to the Holy See, until he turned up a document containing on its frontispiece the name of the arch-heretic Nestorius, and unfolding it, he read what surprised and in no small measure interested him.

Nestorius touched, as we have said elsewhere, with profane hands the doctrine of the Divinity of the Saviour ; and, in doing so, had endeavoured to overturn the corner-stone of the Christian faith. He was a scoffer, and acted with a levity little less than insane in a man of his position. Cruel as well as profane, he persecuted and punished in every way within his power the opponents of his false teaching ; and

Photius noted, in addition, that he was a profound hypocrite, whose words and professions bore upon them the stamp of insincerity. And yet this man, too, appealed to the See of Rome. He wrote two letters to Pope Celestine, in which, carefully avoiding all allusion to any of the errors he had taught, he related, in moving words, his sufferings in the cause of religion. His object was to get from the Pope some recognition, however slight, some testimony as to character; or, at least, to prevent him from condemning him as a heresiarch—an issue which he looked upon not only as possible, but as probable. The wary Celestine—and Photius noted it well—was not deceived by the special pleading of Nestorius. He attached no importance to his letters, or the professions they contained, but called together a synod of Bishops in Rome, and put into their hands, for examination, the circulated writings of this heresiarch; and when these Fathers declared that they were full of errors in faith, Celestine issued an excommunication against him, allowing him ten days after the receipt of the document to retract his errors and return to the true Faith.

“Bewildering recitals!” thought Photius, “but instructive. They fill me with uncertainty as to the prudence of putting my case before so stern and searching a tribunal as that of Rome; but I am committed to this course, for Bardas Cæsar and the Emperor have affirmed the necessity of it. I will go to the Emperor and discuss with him the manner of approaching the Pope.”

In accordance with this resolve, Photius went

in haste to the Imperial Palace, and sought an interview with the Emperor Michael, who had been for some time retired from the public view, and, as many believed, indulging in the degrading habit to which he had been for years a slave. But immediately upon entering the Royal presence, Photius sought a pretext for retiring, perceiving, as he thought, that Michael was not collected enough for business. The Emperor commanded him to remain, however, and beckoning him to a seat near himself abruptly opened the conversation.

"Demons of light and darkness! what would you speak to me about?" he demanded.

"At present, Lord Michael," said Photius, "I am perhaps intrusive."

"No intrusion. What trouble would you share with the Emperor?"

"The Saints be my witnesses," said Photius, "that I would put trouble far from the Thrice-August one, and shut my cares in my own bosom."

"It is well, good High Priest, for Michael has his own chagrins, which are more than enough for his temper."

"Would that your Majesty would load me with some of them! My shoulders are broad and my back is strong."

"Not just now. Another time, perhaps. At present, a Solomon will sit in judgment on any case you may bring before him. What is in your mind? Open it without deceit."

"I have been reading ——"

"Always reading," interrupted Michael; "reading too much."

“And thinking——”

“Thinking—an unwise habit, that makes the head weary, and leads to no good. I never think, but act on the impulse of the moment.”

“But, August one! forgive me. My business is of a nature to require deep and anxious thought.”

“No, potent Lord of the Spirits. Action only—prompt action. What is your care?”

“It may be as you say. Action, if prompt and vigorous, may dispose of it; but the matter must be thought out before action can be taken.”

“I am all attention, Prophet of Israel. Let your thoughts flow from your eloquent lips.”

“Then,” said Photius, “my thoughts are on my tottering position as Patriarch; and my burthen is the fear of its not being confirmed by Rome. We have agreed to put my case before the Pope; but in what form we have not yet determined. Nor, indeed, is it easy to devise a form of words in which to convey our petition; for the Bishops of Rome are proverbially wily and suspicious.”

“Hear the judgment of Solomon,” said Michael, who by this time appeared to have recovered his ordinary intelligence. “The Pope must be brought to recognise you as legitimate Patriarch of Constantinople. This can be compassed in any one of three ways: by bribery, to wit; by force, or by deception. We are rich: the Bishop of Rome, by comparison, is poor. He wants money for the entertainment of pilgrims, and the maintenance of the fabric of St. Peter’s. We send him the gold coins with the likeness of Michael III. upon them; can he refuse us a sanction which will cost him nothing? In his poverty——”

"Not so fast, August Ruler," said Photius. "Have you forgotten that the Pope is no longer a beggar? Know you not that he received long since of Pepin the City of Rome and the territory around it, including more than twenty towns in the neighbourhood; and that Pepin's son Charles confirmed his father's gift, adding provinces besides? The Pope has long been a Sovereign Prince, and wealthy."

"I could *not* forget, if I would," replied Michael bitterly, "that the Bishop of Rome has stolen my territory in and about that city, and——"

"But Thrice-August, you forget," said Photius, "that Rome and its surroundings were lost for ever to the Eastern Empire before Pepin came into Italy. Perhaps I may remind you of an interesting interchange of views relating to this Roman donation, which took place a century ago between the Rulers of the East and West. When Pepin drove the Lombard kings from the lands they had usurped near and around Rome, and presented these provinces to the Pope, your predecessor, Constantine Copronymus, demanded of Pepin a restitution of these territories to the Empire of the East. But Pepin refused. As a chronicler of the events of history, I must tell the truth. Pepin refused, and his refusal was conveyed in words that will live for ever. 'The Franks,' he wrote (the letter is in our Archives), 'have not shed their blood for the Greeks, but for St. Peter, and for the salvation of their souls. No proffered treasure could make me break my agreement, which I will keep inviolable, with the successor of St. Peter.'"

“Well, well,” answered Michael impatiently, “if we cannot bribe the Pope, we may frighten him. I will threaten him with the invasion of his principality, if he does not at once give his sanction and the weight of his authority to the deposition of Ignatius and the events following upon it.”

“But, Lord Michael,” said Photius, “before entering on a course of action so extreme, and against what some superstitious people even in this city name ‘the Rock of Ages,’ would it not be well to temporise?—to write to the Pope in complimentary terms, asking him, as a favour, to send a legate hither to settle the affairs of this Church, mentioning incidentally that a change of Patriarchs has taken place—that Ignatius has gone, and that I have been appointed his successor?”

“Wily prelate, it may be so. You think we should wait and see whether the Pope be mad enough to refuse us his countenance?”

“Precisely. Should he refuse to sanction my promotion to the Patriarchal chair, we enter forthwith upon a war with Rome. It may be waged with spiritual weapons by me and my Church, or with arms by the Emperor and the State. For the present our object should be to induce him to send legates. When they arrive here, we can give them a little instruction as to our requirements; and, if they refuse to receive it, we can add a specimen of our strength and resolve.”

While they were yet speaking Bardas Cæsar was announced; and, having entered the room and saluted the Emperor, was informed of the subject they had been engaged upon, and of the

plan favoured by Photius. He expressed his cordial approval of the Emperor's suggestions, adding that the bribes should not exceed a few offerings to the shrine of St. Peter, and that a hint of compulsion should be insinuated. As for the third means, it should be employed without stint or measure. The Pope should be hoodwinked as to the causes of Ignatius' retirement, the manner of Photius' appointment, the reason for summoning a Council, and the motive which induced them to demand the presence of his legates.

"And," concluded Bardas, after a long harangue, "this mode of dealing with Nicholas is not the offspring of my brain, but is the fruit of many long conversations on the subject held with the ablest and most unscrupulous man in your Empire. I need not name him."

A few days later arrangements were made to carry into effect the resolution arrived at by Photius and his Imperial patrons: in pursuance of which an embassy was equipped and held in readiness to proceed to Rome without delay. The ambassadors were chosen to do honour to the Holy See. Among them were Arsabas, Photius' uncle and brother-in-law of Bardas; Methodius, Metropolitan of Gaugres, and Theophilus, Metropolitan of Armoricum. They carried with them rich presents for the Church of St. Peter; among them, a paten and chalice of gold adorned with precious stones; and they also carried a letter from the Emperor, and a hypocritical epistle from Photius. Here are some of its phrases:

"Ignatius, after having stated that he could no

longer officiate, in consequence of his advanced age and affirmities, has left the Church of Constantinople, and retired to a monastery, founded by himself; where the Emperor, the citizens, and I with them pay him all the honour and duty that is his due. . . . My predecessor having abandoned his high position, the clergy, the Metropolitans, and, above all, the Emperor, kind to all others and cruel to me alone, urged on by I know not what impulse, have come to me, and, without heeding my objections or giving me a moment's time, have declared that it was absolutely necessary that I should charge myself with the Episcopacy. Thus, notwithstanding my tears and my despair, have they done me violence, and have carried out their project. When I think of the grandeur of the Episcopacy, of the infirmity of man, and, in particular, of my own weakness, I am surprised that anyone should be found to take upon himself a yoke so heavy. I cannot tell with what dismay I find myself compelled to bear it. . . ."

The effect produced upon the mind of the Pope by this characteristic letter the reader shall learn in due time and place.

CHAPTER XI.

IMPERIAL HUMOUR.

IT might be supposed, by one who judged Michael III. by his conduct and letters in the affair of Photius, that he was a man of intellect and character; but his life and vices were too notorious throughout the Empire; nor had he so much of natural shame as might prompt him to conceal his degradation beneath a cloak of decent hypocrisy. He appeared in public in the company of horse trainers and hangers-on of the hippodrome, and woke the echoes of the night by boisterous laughter in the society of jesters and buffoons. His least objectionable performance was a march from the Palace to the racecourse at the head of a troop of jeering and shouting boys.

Some thought him mad, and observed him pass with a shake of the head. Others, who were better informed, put down his eccentricities to intemperance. The most correct estimate of his character was that which traced his marvellous misdeeds to wine acting upon a thoroughly depraved disposition.

In a merry humour, he one day sent for his mother Theodora to come and receive the blessing of the Patriarch Ignatius; and when she, in her confiding simplicity, prostrated herself before a muffled figure, whom she believed to be the Patriarch, she received a crude and coarse salutation

from his jester, Theophilus, who was concealed under the Patriarchal robes.

In a fit of unaccountable cruelty, he summoned Ignatius to the Palace, and commanded him to cut off the hair of his mother and sisters, and to clothe them in the religious habit ; and, the Patriarch refusing to be a party to such an indignity, he imprisoned them in the Palace of Carus, where they were kept for many months under the most cruel restraint.

“Cut off the head of that fellow,” he would sometimes say, pointing to a distinguished courtier ; “no, clip off his ears and take a slice off his nose.”

He clothed a rower of his galley, named Basilicus, in the Imperial purple, put a crown on his head, and brought him before the Senate ; and, directing attention to his fine mien and handsome figure, said : “I am strongly disposed to make this man joint Emperor with myself.” Such follies and wickedness on the part of Michael were sullenly tolerated by the Court and people of Constantinople for several years : for he was the Emperor of the East. Long live the Emperor !

Curious and silly projects were ever occurring to the mind of this inept ruler ; but of all the follies that ever took his fancy captive, the greatest was that which urged him to send a herald to summon Andrimades to his presence—“to meet the August ! without delay in the covered alley of the Palace garden that opens on the statue of St. Cassia.”

While on this occasion waiting the return of his messenger, or the coming of the person he had sent for, Michael could be seen pacing to and fro

in the shady lane. He stopped from time to time, and seemed to reflect ; and then he laughed a low gurgling laugh ; or he started and looked backward and shook his head slowly in a menacing manner. His rolling eyes directed hurried and impatient glances, now in the direction of the Palace, again on the street, which could be seen for most of its length through the openings, from the elevated ground on which he walked. Anyone that knew his character would say that he was meditating some plot which would culminate in intrigue or violence.

“The demons have him !” he ejaculated. “How long he delays ! Two hours have elapsed since I despatched a herald in search of him.” After saying which, he turned his eyes again in the direction of the Palace, from the door of which he saw Andrimades emerging in a state of great hurry and excitement.

“Andrimades,” said he, as the latter approached rapidly, and with profound reverence, “you are always late. I think of trying the effect of the air of the mountains on your energies. You are lazy and disrespectful, and nearer a fall than you think.”

“Late ! Pardon me, Lord Michael, I am not late this time. I started at once when the herald summoned me. I made no delay. O, I was near forgetting. There was an auction of Chian and Malmsey wine in the forum as I came along, and I stopped——”

“Come, come,” said Michael, “let me hear no apology. You are a sensualist, a wine-bibber, an

epicurean, a useless encumbrance at Court. If you fail to carry into effect a project which was the cause of my sending for you, and which I am anxious should succeed, you will forfeit my friendship for ever."

"Cut off my nose first——"

"Not yet," said the Emperor, amused and softened by the nature of the unfinished sentence. "Andrimades," said he, assuming a confidential and familiar tone, "have you ever acted the hawk in pouncing on the tender dove?"

"Most August, I have done everything in that line. I love game, as you know, on the table, and I kill it on the plains and in the forests."

"But perhaps you have never taken human game?" said Michael with a sinister glance. "If I mistake not, your experiences of the field will not have prepared you for the expedition on which I propose to send you. Listen to me attentively. From this spot on which I stand, I have often seen a slave passing on the street below in the direction of the Church of St. Sophia. Many slaves pass that way, you will say, and it is true. But a particular slave passes twice a day along that street who has attracted my attention for many reasons. There is a firmness and dignity in her walk, a mildness in her expression, an uncommon degree of modesty in her whole deportment. She is not very tall. She is not, perhaps, handsome. Yet there is a freshness about her, and a light shining in her face, which tells of a noble soul. You know that Michael III., though not a spiritualist, is a great admirer of a fine spirit animating a comely frame."

"And," interposed Andrimades, "you wish me to negotiate the purchase of this slave from her master."

"No! I do not wish anything of the kind. But I wish that you should seize her, and keep her for a hunt—to run her down as you would a beast of prey."

Andrimades looked a puzzled look at the Emperor, and repeated slowly: "To keep her for a hunt, and run her down as I should a beast of prey?"

"Booby!" said Michael impatiently; "can you not take the idea into your dull head, or is it too big for its capacity?"

But Andrimades, instead of answering the questions, repeated the words a second time: "To keep her for a hunt, and run her down as you would a beast of prey." Then he said feebly: "How can I seize her? Where should I keep her? Who would be so cruel as to hunt a human being for sport?"

"Seize her as she goes on some errand," said Michael.

"In the open street, and in the light of day, and have all the town crying after me?"

"Stupid! neither in open street nor in the light of day; but under the cover of night, or in some lonely lane or country pathway."

Andrimades was silent for some time, and then he said: "Well-cared-for Christian slave girls seldom go out at night, and are never seen but in the public thoroughfares."

"To which I reply," said Michael pointedly, "bide your time, and await your opportunity."

"And where could I hide this pretty wench, if chance threw her into my hands? I dare not take her to my house, nor would you ask me to thrust her into a lonely and, perhaps, fetid prison."

"No, but I have not thought over this point. No, no; a prison would not do. Besides there are the chattering jailers. You might bring her here, and put her into one of the unused chambers of the slaves' side of this Palace, where no one will mind her coming or going: they are sufficiently used to my whims."

"Now, potent Emperor, may I put my crude thoughts about this project of yours into words?"

"You may; into any words that please you."

"Then I say boldly, the project is a mad one."

"By no means," said Michael laughing. "Quite as sane as my action when I raised Gryllus the buffoon to the Patriarchate, and named him my Patriarch of Constantinople. As reasonable and more human than cutting off the ears of the freedman Gripsus, which I ordered to be done in my presence, that I might have a good laugh over his wincings and whinings."

"But," said Andrimades, "the public conscience will revolt against the outrage to Christian propriety, and even civil decency, which the blind can see in the act of chasing a girl, even a slave girl, through the country."

"Not more than it revolts against the march of my clown-metropolitans and bishops through the city. But I do not wish to make this pastime public: you seem to suppose that the hunt is to be run through the hippodrome, whereas my wish is

that it should come off in a secluded part of the country. No noise! No noise! Remember this well. No noise! No blundering! as you love your ears and your nose. No one to witness the capture; no one to join in the pursuit but the Emperor and a few trusted jesters, and perhaps yourself, as you are in the secret. Does this satisfy you, or have you any other objection to urge?"

"Many," said Andrimades, "if I dared to say them."

"I am in a listening mood to-day," said Michael, "and much amused at your lover's zeal for this girl. Say all you would to deter me from her pursuit; your arguments up to this have been but childish."

"Did anyone before now ever even hear of the pursuit of a woman by hunters?"

"Yes," said the Emperor, "in certain provinces of the Empire far away, the bride is set loose before the knot of wedlock is tied for good, and hunted through the fields until she is captured by her intended husband."

"A pastime only," said Andrimades, "and not offensive to the principal actor."

"Mine, too, is a pastime," said Michael; "and we will make it as painless as we can. For the bird will be allowed to take flight as soon as she is caught. Now, if you have any more quibbles in that foolish head of yours, let me hear them."

"If the slave should not run——?"

"O, senseless! Slaves are quick movers, and this one is agile and of elastic step; a good runner, I trow, and one that will give any amount of sport. The little Christian rogue will fly for her honour as well as for her life."

"I have no more to say," said Andrimades ; "I have said, I fear, too much. I have spoken my thoughts, however, with your permission : follow your course and command my services."

"We understand each other at last. This chase which I propose is only a whim of mine. I am tired of the pursuit of boars and wolves, and just now my soul revolts against blood. I want to do a little hunting of another kind. This slave girl is, I have been told, the property of the Turmarch Theophylact ; and in this, as I hate the man, I find a motive for hunting down this particular human game before all others. Don't make a mistake as to my intentions. I repeat, I wish to catch the bird, and let her then fly away. Off she goes, as soon as taken—home, if she wishes : I don't mind where. Or, I may let her loose, through you or some other idiot, perhaps in Asia, perhaps in Bulgaria, perhaps in one of the islands of the Peleponesus. Catch her as she goes on some errand without noise or discovery, and bring her away stealthily. Look out for the way and means : do it quickly, and let there be no confusion. If you fail in this errand—well, you know who is your employer."

So saying, he turned away and walked quickly towards the Palace.

Andrimades looked after him as he retired, shook his head slowly and solemnly, and murmured : "How long !"

Almost at the same moment he observed her who had been the subject of the conversation walking swiftly along the street in the direction

of St. Sophia. Without further delay he set off in pursuit, nor lost sight of the girl till she passed before him into the Cathedral. He lay in wait in the porch.

CHAPTER XII.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

WE must now transport the reader to a fine house in the Fifth Region of the city, near the gate that led to Adrianople, and into a sick chamber. There lay a young man of noble mien, stretched on a hard bed, and resting uneasily, as if in much pain. There was but little furniture in the apartment: a table of rough timber and two small benches, on one of which a roll of manuscript lies unfolded, are near the couch; a helmet, a sword, and some armour are suspended on the wall near the door. A large image of the Crucified looks on the sick man from a niche to the right. A dull light is shed over a scene sufficiently dreary and desolate by a small lamp suspended from the ceiling. The Christian soldier—for such we must suppose him to be—had been sleeping a restless and agitated sleep, when a light step, heard at the threshold, made him start up to a sitting posture, in a state of excitement and alarm. He directed a hurried glance towards the intruder, and in a minute sank back, composed but exhausted.

“I have been dreaming, Zeta,” said he, “and your coming was to me the footstep of the angel, summoning me away.”

A tear started to the girl's eyes as she sat down by the bedside and commenced turning over the

parchment roll to conceal her momentary agitation.

"I find," he continued, "that the struggle is drawing to a close. Life is dear to us all. But if I must part with it, I shall do so like a Christian soldier. I have had my share of toil and danger on this side of the tomb, and I hope for rest and safety beyond it."

A tear fell from the girl's eye upon the noble words in which the Apostle of the Gentiles describes the resurrection of the body : "It shall rise in incorruption . . . it shall rise in glory . . . it shall rise in power."

"Girl," said the young soldier, as he perceived her emotion, "if I had thought for a moment that your attendance on me had awakened in your soul an undue sentiment of sympathy, I should have insisted on your accepting the rank and security of a freed woman long before now."

"You have been generous in saving me from worse than ravening wolves," said the girl timidly ; "a considerate master to a poor friendless slave. If it be just and fair to compassionate the friendless, it can scarcely be criminal to make the only return which is within the means of the poor—gratitude."

"You have been to the Church of St. Sophia ?" said the sick officer, changing the subject of conversation.

"Yes," answered the slave ; "and I have prayed for your recovery before the statue of the soldier-Saint, Maurice."

The soldier turned away musingly towards the

half-open door. A shadow was cast upon the wall for a moment, as of someone listening outside ; but before he could remark on its presence it disappeared.

"You have been late at your devotions this evening, Zeta," said the officer. "You must have prayed with greater fervour than usual."

"Perhaps so," said the slave ; "though a feeling of fear and timidity was the principal cause of the delay."

"Explain," said Theophylact.

"A man," said she, "muffled as if for the purpose of concealment, was watching me, and crossing my path along the street. This mysterious personage issued from the gate of the Imperial Palace. He came up with me as I passed under the Arch of Constantine ; he went rapidly before me towards the Church of St. Sophia, as if he knew that I was going thither. At the church door he stared into my face, though his countenance was to me invisible. I was conscious that he was waiting for me outside ; and I was afraid to leave the church until the crowd of worshippers, who came to celebrate the vigil of to-morrow's festival, dispersed. I came away then, with the mass of people, and escaped his farther notice."

"Another proof," said he, "of the expediency of your accepting the rank and security of a freed woman before your only protector is gone."

"O, as for that," said the slave, "you know my determination. I have been born in slavery. In slavery I will die. I have been honoured among your domestics. You have guarded and respected

me since I came under your roof. I owe to you my preservation from libertines and dangers worse than death. Could liberty, or any advantage it might bring with it, equal the privilege of serving you now in your sickness," she added, in a low voice, full of deep earnestness, "of doing what I may to relieve your sufferings?"

"But suppose I die within a very brief period?" said Theophylact, manifestly affected by the fidelity of his young domestic.

"I have prepared for an event which I believe and hope cannot take place. I will fly from this city of impiety and schism when you are gone. I will cast myself into the arms of the mother of us all, Rome, where I will close my days in peace."

"You are a great traveller in imagination and intention," said Theophylact. "You have, I dare say, an accurate knowledge of the distance of Rome from here, and of the difficulties and dangers of the journey?"

"No; but I trust in the Father of the fatherless. My good Angel will conduct me, and bring me safely through the perils of that most arduous undertaking."

"It is strange," said Theophylact, "that the course of conversation has brought us to a subject that has been in my thoughts for some days. I have been thinking of proposing to you a real and immediate journey to a place at some distance from this city. Heretofore I have not spoken to you of the project, fearing you would recoil from the danger of journeying alone and unprotected through the solitary roads of the country. Now

that I find you to be so brave a traveller, I will make known to you my wishes without disguise. It is manifest to me—it must be clear to you—that my life is fast drawing to a close. I am anxious to prepare for that dread summons which may ring in my ears before many weeks have expired. I am, therefore, desirous to receive the consolation of the Church from some thoroughly Orthodox priest, whose fidelity to Ignatius has never been shaken or questioned. In this city there are, no doubt, many who are faithful to their Patriarch; but so many, too, have been cajoled or terrified by the Court into the adoption of unsound views and schismatical courses, that, in the absence of Ignatius, I should hesitate to commit my soul to the ministrations of any of them. There is a monastery of Basilian monks about five miles from here, down the Bosphorus. In this monastery there are priests who have always been distinguished for their orthodoxy. I wish to be ministered to by some one of these priests, and to receive the last rites at his hands. Here is the journey I propose to you—to the celebrated Monastery of St. Paul, so well known and so easily to be discovered—with a view to summon some of its sainted inmates to the bedside of a dying sinner. It is for you to say if you will undertake it.”

“I have no fear,” answered the slave firmly. “When employed in a work of charity like this I may expect a special protection from on high.”

“Then you start to-morrow,” said Theophylact.

“To-morrow, in the afternoon, I will be prepared,” answered the slave.

"A blessing on your fidelity, Zeta," said the officer ; and as he spoke a shadow again flitted on the wall near the door, and a few moments later was heard the footfall of one hurrying away from the house.

CHAPTER XIII.

A PURSUIT AND A FLIGHT.

ON the following day, a few hours after the sun had passed the meridian, Zeta started on the mission alluded to in the last chapter. Her way lay, at first, through the streets of the city, and then through a lane, grass-grown and bordered with shrubs, which wound along the right bank of the Bosphorus.

It was the hour at which a city turns out its inhabitants to enjoy the air, after the midday heat has subsided. Men and women were loitering at the doorways, in the market-places, at the public and private baths. All the urchins of the city were now adrift on the streets, where they made a merry din with shout and laughter, and sometimes disturbed the equanimity of the staid. Girls were near the fountains, drinking of the pure beverage, or wreathing garlands around the necks of the saints and angels that guarded them. Young men in the open spaces were measuring their strength by quoit-throwing or wielding the heavy club, or running races against each other. Old matrons, within doors, were imbibing draughts of air through chinks and windows ; and old men, outside, were expanding their stiffening limbs fanned by a refreshing breeze. Every one seemed exhilarated by the unusual freshness of this afternoon, following the unbearable heat of an intensely oppressive day.

The animals even gave signs of being soothed and happy. Horses pawed and snorted and tossed their heads high ; and dogs barked playfully, and wrestled and sported along the streets.

There was one figure, moving silently across the city, which seemed to be quite unconscious of the animation of the scene that surrounded her, and quite insensible to the glories of that spring afternoon. Wrapped in a loose robe, the end of which she had gathered and raised over her head so as to conceal her features, she hurried along, without heeding the crowd or bestowing one nod of recognition. Loungers collected about the entrance of the Baths of Honorius, joked and laughed loudly at her strange appearance as she approached : she heeded them not, but shot by with the rapidity of a bird. A few young men stood in her way as she passed by the Golden Ox : she brushed past them with a confident step, and continued her course unmolested. Children cried after her, and dogs barked as she came up : she did not look around even for a moment, or condescend to notice such interruptions. Absorbed by the one idea of faithfully discharging the duty that had been confided to her by her dying master, Zeta passed across the bustling city, as if she had been travelling through the silent desert.

Arrived at the suburbs, she began to breathe more freely. She felt relieved from the intolerable pressure of observation, and like some creature of the air or of the plains escaped from captivity. The scene was a captivating one. Shrubs and trees of the most beautiful and varied foliage guarded her path—

the plantain, the Trebizond palm, the mulberry, the mimosa of the Nile, the acacia, the cyprus, the pine and the fig tree. Now the bright waters of the Bosphorus gleamed through the trees, reflecting the crimson tints of the February sky. Now the screen of foliage opened on the right, disclosing the distant country. Anon the sinuosity of the way brought her in front and within view of the city she had left, with its superb churches, surmounted by glittering domes ; its houses, painted in gay colours ; and its gardens, filled with plants of perpetual verdure. She journeyed along, ever mindful of her mission, but cheered by the loveliness of the objects that Nature so bountifully had scattered in her way.

At one point she stopped, and gave herself over to the charm of the landscape. The mysterious influence of mother earth, acting upon her own offspring, the human frame, was soothing and inexpressibly sweet. She stood, and as she leaned forward, steeped in sympathy with nature, her mantle fell from her head, and disclosed her bright countenance, glowing with unwonted fire.

Just then a clatter of mounted men grew out of the distance, and, as the party came in sight, a commanding voice cried : "Forward, surround her ; seize her. Long live the Emperor !" Like a fawn surprised by the hunters on an open plain, she started, and leaning forward, set out to run at the top of her speed. Conscious that her pursuers must rapidly gain upon her, she bounded into the fields, over a stream that intervened. A pause in the pursuit appeared to

follow, which enabled her to gain a considerable lead, and when the sound of hoofs again fell upon her ear she was aware that her pursuers were more distant, and not so numerous as before. Again, however, they came near, and panting with fear of being captured she bent her course so as eventually to regain the road, tearing through a belt of trees and underwood. Her pursuers, baffled again, took counsel; while she, worn out with fatigue and fright, thought of lying down on the road and waiting until they should come up. Then the image of her dying friend and master came before her mind, and gave her nerve to struggle again for her liberty to serve him. But whither should she turn now? She had tried the narrow road; she had tried the open plain without success. There only remained the water way by which she might escape, but at the imminent risk of her life.

For a moment she hesitated; but the voices of her pursuers, drawing near, decided her. She stepped into the stream, and swimming with the current, was quickly out of reach. When, at last, they gained the margin, she was but a white speck among the waters; and as they stood helplessly gazing, she faded altogether from their sight.

CHAPTER XIV.

A GOURMAND ON MEAGRE FARE.

AFTER failing in his efforts to capture the slave, Andrimades returned to his house, sick at heart, sore from exertion and travelling, disgusted with himself, with the Emperor, and with his commission.

His home was, in some respects, a peculiar one : it was not without size, was pretentious, and luxurious in its furniture ; but in this was remarkable, that it contained pagan in place of Christian statuary, and had a "triclinium," modelled on the old Roman pattern. The friends of Andrimades were puzzled to know where he got his statuary. It was no secret that he travelled into Greece Proper at times, and it was rumoured that he went there in search of hidden or buried works of art ; but, beyond this, there was no visible clue, nor did he, even in his wildest flights of jest and banter, give the slightest hint as to the market in which he purchased his Junos, Cupids, Mercuries, Neptunes, and Dianas. He had, as we have said, no Christian models in his house—not a saint or an angel ; but it would be doing him an injustice to say that he undervalued or disliked them, for he was not an Iconoclast, and he always said that religious images were well enough in their proper place. For himself at home, and particularly at the dinner table, he gave a preference to "the ancients," as he named them ;

for there was no restraint in their society, and he found them pleasant companions at the social board.

The attachment of Andrimades to all things old was not without effects, which told sometimes against his reputation ; for he was fond, too fond indeed, of what he named the " old wine of Chios." He brought himself to believe that his ancestors were of old and high Grecian stock, and that they drunk freely of the produce of that favoured island ; and he justified himself in his fondness for the beverage on the principle that he was continuing a family tradition. It was wonderful how this man, humorous, frivolous, and idle as he was, did not fall headlong into the dissipated ways of the Court of Michael III., at which he was a frequent guest : but he did not ; for the Emperor's ways had no attraction for him, and his utter degradation, when in his cups, filled him with deep disgust.

Still, there surely was a danger for Andrimades this evening, when he returned home weary, hungry, and longing for the comforts of the table after such a day of denial—a danger that he might go to excess in liquids, as the solids put before him, on the centre of his board, were neither varied nor appetising, for it was a fast-day.

Andrimades was no faster, but his countrymen were ; in truth, the fasts of the Eastern Church were more frequent and severe than those of the West : but faster or no faster, he could not ignore Ash Wednesday. The Great Fast was before him, and he could not turn his face from it.

"Fish," he said, as he entered the triclinium, and stretched himself on one of the luxurious couches that lay by the board. "What fish have you put on?" to a tall slave who stood on the side.

"Tunny fish," said the slave.

"Tunny fish! A poor meal to put before a hungry man like me. Tunny fish of the Bosphorus! I sicken at the word! Was there no carp from the Danube to be had?"

"No fish of any kind but tunny fish."

"In remembrance of the little maid, who is now, I fear, being nibbled by his kin in the depths of this stream of ours, I'll address myself to the tunny fish, though, I confess, I don't love it."

At this moment a hideous face was thrust through the drawn curtain of the doorway, and through the widely opened mouth of that face came the sound of a prolonged bray.

"Gryllus!" said Andrimades. "Do I see the head of Gryllus the jester?"

"You don't," replied the intruder.

"Whose then?" said Andrimades.

"The Patriarch's!"

"You fool!" said Andrimades, "how do you dare?"

"How do you?" said the buffoon. "I know all about your doings."

"What do you know, imbecile?"

"I know that you're in love, and that you eloped with a slave, and that she was drowned. Michael told me so."

"Nonsense!"

"It's no nonsense ; and he said that you made a great noise, and that all the town is talking about you, and that he'll teach you sense before long."

"You have only half your lesson, fool. You don't know what you are speaking about."

"I know well. Beware ! Michael will be upon you, maybe, this night." And the hideous face was withdrawn, the owner of it going away with a gurgling laugh.

"More knave than fool," said Andrimades. "The fellow had a meaning for what he said. He has disturbed me, and, I am afraid, the tunny fish too." Then, to his attendant he added : "Bring me Chian, the best the cellar contains." And meanwhile he hummed the refrain of a drinking song in praise of the vintage. The wine was placed before him ; he drank it, and asked for more. Then he said : "Bring of the wine that I bought three days ago, at an auction in the Forum of Constantine ; it was highly recommended for strength and flavour." It was at once produced.

As he sipped it, he muttered a eulogy upon it : "Ah ! 'tis rare stuff, and clears the brain of cobwebs. Now I see through the visit of Gryllus the buffoon ; he was sent by the Emperor to spy upon me. I find the intellect brightening."

But whether the Chian wine were the cause, or the Chian wine acting on the tunny fish, or the visit of Gryllus, or all combined, Andrimades' intellectual flame was growing dismally dull, while the sense of exhilaration remained ;

and, as was his wont whenever he went to excess, he became more communicative to his "friends," and more proud of his high ancestry than usual.

"Your health," said he abruptly to a winged Mercury that stood on tip-toe to his right. "That ball will fall and crush someone, if you don't move steadily," to a statue of Atlas, bearing the globe on his head.

Then he went on : "What a man I am ! I might have taken the slave captive but for my good nature that prevented me. I rode after her at full speed certainly, but she was too fast for me, and I was glad. But if I was glad of her escape, why did I cross the stream and continue the pursuit ? This rather puzzles me. I was last in the race across the plain—how was this ? Did my horse sulk and refuse to go ? I think he did ; but it must have been my good nature that made me pull him in. Did I come up as they were trying to force a passage through the hedge-way ? What did I do then ? I remained where I was, because I was afraid I might hurt my tender skin ! Who says so ?"—starting up—"I must be drunk : I believe I said so myself. Between you and me," he added, stooping confidentially to a little statue of Cupid, "if I did say so, it was but the truth.

"I am a great man," he continued. "I am a large landowner : I have a fine estate in Bulgaria ; I have vineyards farther south, I am not the first of my family. You shake your head," said he to a frescoed figure on the wall. "What do you mean ? Do you insinuate that my father was not

a noble proprietor? What do I hear? Have you the audacity? 'A market gardener,' you say. Did you say it, or did you not? Speak. Did you ever hear it said that my father was the owner of vineyards in the Peninsula? Do you not know that I possess them as hereditary property? 'A vine dresser,' you say! A vine dresser! My noble father a vine dresser! Out upon you for a lying fool!" And in a paroxysm of rage, he seized upon a drinking flagon, with the intention of hurling it at his imaginary opponent, when footsteps were heard outside and the rattling of arms.

"Who goes there?" demanded Andrimades, somewhat sobered at the strange sound. The curtain that hung before the door of the apartment was raised, and an officer of the Emperor's Household entered, followed by his men.

"Your presence at the Imperial Palace is required," said the officer, firmly but respectfully.

"My presence at the Palace?" stammered Andrimades. "Who requires it? I am at dinner with my friends. I cannot go."

"The ruler of the State, the august Emperor, summons you," said the officer.

"The Emperor? I care not for the Emperor, I'm an emperor myself; or, at least, I ought to be an emperor."

"Are you prepared to come?" said the officer. "If not, I have orders to bring you under arrest."

"Arrest me!" said he, "you dare not. Arrest me for Michael, the slave-hunter! I despise him, I despise his uncle, I defy you to take me."

"Seize that man!" said the officer; and imme-

diately the soldiers surrounded him, he loudly vociferating at the meanness of his convivial friends, in allowing a man of his importance to be carried off like a felon without striking a blow for him, or even remonstrating with his captors.

CHAPTER XV.

THE AWAKENING.

ANDRIMADES, thus rudely made prisoner, was, much to the surprise of all on-lookers, conducted through the streets of the city, surrounded by guards, to the Imperial Palace; and had to enter on a second journey of exposure and humiliation from that residence to the Patriarchal Palace, where the Emperor Michael was said to be closeted with Photius. He was ushered into the library, where the Emperor and his friend were conversing.

"So, Judas!" said Michael, in a loud and angry tone; "you have been plotting against the Emperor, in the interest of the deposed Patriarch."

Andrimades, not seeing the point of the remark, began: "It was not through fault of mine that we did not seize ——"

"And whose fault but yours is this treason against the ruler of the State?"

"When we came to the low ground," said the other, following on his own line of thought, "I was very nearly ——"

"Booby! I think high ground will clear the mists off your clouded intellect: to the mountains you shall go, within a week."

"And as the river could not be——"

"The river, dullard! Wine is, I imagine, more

to your taste than flowing water : but neither wine nor water will soon be yours to touch, for I will send you where you shall find only ice."

"That slave," pursued Andrimades, "could not be——."

"That slave, indeed ! The truth is out at last. You have not perhaps heard, Photius, how this madman has taken an insane fancy for a young slave girl, and has been caught in the act of aiding her to escape from her bondage, and——"

It was now Andrimades' turn to interrupt ; which he did, in a loud voice, saying :

"It was you, and no one else, that sent me——"

"Away with him," shouted Michael. "Push him off, thrust him into that recess yonder, and close it up. Quick, quick. Let him not utter another word. There—is it secure ? That's enough. He can now sleep away the effects of his Chian in the company of the ancients ; and, by the sword of Saul, I will have him tried on a charge of treason to-morrow.'

Andrimades, thrust in this abrupt and coarse fashion into a retired nook of Photius' library, and shut off from the light of day, was further sobered by the shock, and fell into a train of murky reflections on the events of the last few days. "So," he soliloquised, "the upshot of all I have gone through is that I am a traitor. Now to become a traitor I must have betrayed someone. Here is the kernel of the case : Whom did I betray ? Did I betray myself ? No, unless to nourish myself with the best of things—the daintiest flesh and fish, and the most choice wine—be betrayal. No, I have not

been a traitor up to this time ; but I will be a traitor. I'll betray Michael, the sot ; I'll go out into the streets, and stop the passers-by, and tell them all about the attempt to capture the slave. Let me out," he shouted ; "let me out of this dark hole : I am off to betray the brigand." And his voice went travelling round the passages and diving into the niches of the library, creating a din of echoes, as if the old authors had come to life, and were all talking together. "They are speaking outside," he said. "Halloo ! Take away this bar, and burst open this door. Do you hear ?" And again the echo of his own voice mocked him. "They don't hear me, or they don't know where I am. I'm here," he cried, raising his voice once more. "Here I am, in a nook, a corner, a hole ; it's as dark as pitch, and as dry as dust. Here I am, here, here——," and he began to beat against the partition with his clenched fist. "If you are there, Lord Michael, I tell you, in presence of Photius, that you are a slave driver and an oppressor of the innocent. I'll let out the truth. The city shall know you. Let me out. Photius ! Bardas ! Homer ! Thucydides ! Theophilus !—ancients and moderns—let me out, in the name of common humanity, I'm being smothered ; I'm famishing. Or, if you are not allowed to release the prisoner, pass me a small flagon of Chian, to quench my burning thirst."

Andrimades continued to entreat and expostulate with imaginary listeners (for the library was without a living being but himself) until at last, overcome by his exertions, and yielding to the

effects of his previous excess, he fell into a profound sleep.

How long he had slept he could not say ; he was awakened by a dull noise, as if someone was trying to force the partition open. He was, in fact, wide awake, but from the vision that presented itself to his eyes he thought he was dreaming. For right before him, in the aperture of the partition, which had been partly removed, was a figure in white, veiled, like a marble statue—the figure of a woman, tall and comely, clothed in loose drapery, that hung in graceful folds about her. He started and would have cried out, when the figure raised its hand to command silence.

“ Now, Andrimades,” commenced the spectre, in a suppressed but distinct voice, “ do not suppose that you are in the presence of a spirit ; for I am a human being like yourself ; and do not be under the fancy that you are dreaming, for you are quite in possession of your faculties. Promise to answer a question or two that I shall put to you, and I will leave you to repose.”

“ I will not promise ; for though you frightened me at first, I feel now more than reconciled to your company. I shall feel sorry at your going. I beg you to prolong your visit to the utmost.”

“ But,” said the intruder impatiently, “ I have come here at great inconvenience and risk, and I must have an answer quickly and distinctly. I promise you, if you comply with my request, I will use my influence in a certain high quarter for your release from this prison.”

“ Oh ! This puts the case in quite a different light. I am at your service, Madam.”

"Then," said the lady, "I want to know of Theophylact—where is he : how is he? And of his slave ; is it true that she has been drowned?"

"As regards Theophylact," said he, "I saw him two days ago, stretched on a sick bed, in his own house. For his slave, when last my eyes fell upon her, she was floating down the Bosphorus, buoyed up on the water like a spirit."

"Then she was not drowned?" demanded the lady anxiously.

"Certainly not drowned ; nor likely to be. I believe she was partly sustained by a floating spar. My eyes followed her till she was lost in the distance."

"The Theotokos be praised!" said the mysterious visitor, and with an abrupt salutation disappeared. The partition was closed at once by someone outside, who had been in attendance on her.

"Wonders will never cease!" exclaimed Andrimades, as he considered the matter : and with this sage reflection on his parched lips he once more fell asleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BASILIANS.

THE Basilian monks of the ninth century were filled with the spirit which animated their founder. They were poor, pious, mortified, and disengaged from the world. Of their father and prototype it has been said that "he never had more than one tunic and one coat, lay on the ground, and sometimes watched whole nights in prayer. He wore a long hair-cloth garment in the night, but not by day, that it might be concealed from men. He inured himself to bear the sharpest cold, which in the mountains of Pontus is very severe ; and he never allowed himself the refreshment of any other fire than the heat of the sun. His only repast in the day was of bread and clear water, except that on festivals he added a few herbs ; and so sparing were his meals that he seemed almost to live without nourishment. St. Gregory of Nyssa compared his abstinence to the fast of Elias, who ate nothing for forty days ; and St. Gregory of Nazianzum facetiously bantered him upon his excessive paleness, and said of him that "his body scarce seemed to have any life," and that he was "without wife, without estate or goods, without flesh, and seemingly without blood."

The austere spirit of St. Basil was perpetuated among the monks of his name in the ninth century ; and in no place were his principles more clearly

exemplified, and his manner of life more strictly imitated, than in the great Monastery of St. Paul, situated down the river about five miles from the City of Constantine. The inmates of this monastery rose early, and, like the religious of modern times, devoted the morning hours to prayer and singing the Divine praises. A scanty repast of dried fruits, bread, and water imparted just sufficient strength to enable them to accomplish their daily work which, over and above the exercise of almost continual prayer, consisted in some light manual labour within the house, and occasional journeys of charity to the peasantry of the adjacent country. Gossiping and idleness were equally strangers to this community. There was no news about the world outside whispered there: stories were in circulation, but they regarded the lives and exploits of God's servants; and if ever a stranger came there, it was not to announce the scandals of secular society, but to learn, from the examples of sublime holiness presented to his eyes, a lesson of heavenly discipline.

It was a simple life—the life of these religious of St. Basil. And yet even the greatest worldling could not say that it was the simplicity of stupidity or clownishness; for some of the noblest blood of the Empire of the East flowed in the veins of these poor and mortified monks. Thither had come the military man, who had gathered laurels on the plains of Syria, to dedicate to God's service the remainder of a life preserved in a hundred battles with the fierce Saracenic foe. Thither, too, came the gay young courtier, to atone for his boisterous

revels by the all-day silence and the midnight prayer ; and for his intemperance and luxury by the short repast, the rough habit, and the hard and poorly furnished bed. Side by side at work and at prayer were the lord of the soil, who had ruled over a thousand serfs and farmers, and the philosopher or rhetorician who had swayed the multitude by the power of his eloquence or the depth of his learning. But poor or rich, whether of patrician or plebeian blood, learned or uneducated, here they laid aside their worldly indolence or ambition, and on a common and lowly plane laboured only for the purification of their souls and their advancement in the spiritual life.

Among the religious practices of this community was that of rising at midnight and chanting *Nocturns* in the church. And on the night on which the slave Zeta was seen floating down the Bosphorus, the midnight bell, as usual, rang out in the Monastery of St. Paul. It was followed by a rustling sound of sandalled feet upon paved floors, as the monks wended along the corridors till they met together at the chapel door. The noise gave place to stillness as they found their places and settled down into their stalls. To a looker-on the shadows flitting into the church were as weird in the silence and darkness as a concourse of the spirits of the dead.

The offices of the Church performed in the stillness of midnight are necessarily solemn and awe-inspiring ; and when the Prior rose up to intone in a sonorous voice the invocation at the beginning of the prayers, it was like the call of a muster roll

of disembodied spirits. The single voice of the president was answered by a united volume of sounds that came from the assembled monks ; and they proceeded through psalm, prayer, and lesson, with chant and response, the voices sometimes swelled into jubilant praise and thanksgiving, sometimes sank into suppliant accents of penitence. At the end all with one accord fell on their knees, and remained awhile absorbed in private devotion. And after a short interval the Prior rose up and intoned the Trisagion :

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy and Immortal,
Have mercy on us.

Scarcely had he pronounced the last "Eleison," when it was taken up outside the church. An agonising cry of "Eleison, eleison!" came from the direction of the river : the cry of someone in distress ; a wailing of someone sinking in the waters—the appeal, it might be, of a perishing soul. Who could be indifferent to it? In a moment the brethren were on their feet, and hurrying out of the church ; they rushed to the bank of the stream, whence they could see, floating on the wave, the indistinct outline of a human figure, holding out its hands and calling loudly for assistance.

It took but a few minutes to loose the convent boat from its moorings, and row into the stream ; and more than astonished were the monks, on approaching the person in distress, to perceive a young girl, floating high in the water, buoyed up

by unknown means. They took her into their boat, and on their return journey heard from her that she had floated from near the city, which was five miles up the stream ; that she had been terrified by the darkness and the gloom of the deep water ; but that the current had favoured her, and that she had escaped, by the kind protection of Providence, from all dangers, and had finally arrived safe at the destination for which she left the city, to wit, the Basilian Monastery of St. Paul, whither she had been despatched to summon a priest to attend on her dying master.

“ And what is his name ? ” inquired the Abbot, who had come down to the shore to meet them.

“ The Turmarch Theophylact,” she replied, “ who is as distinguished for his orthodoxy as for his bravery.”

“ But surely,” remonstrated the Abbot, “ his fine frame can bear a protracted sickness ; and not a week has elapsed since I have seen him in his usual health.”

“ But his illness is mysterious,” said the slave. “ He has been struck down suddenly : he fears that he has swallowed some noxious drug unwittingly, or that poison has been administered to him.”

“ Heaven forbid ! But from what you say there is no time to be lost. So by early dawn I will go to him, accompanied by the priests of the monastery, that we may, if we find him in danger of death, administer the last rites, to prepare his spirit for its departure hence.”

“ Here no woman may enter,” was the motto of these cloistered monks of the ninth century, as it

is of their representatives at the present day. But will not this austere rule be set aside in the present case? For here is a young girl numbed with cold, after many hours of complete immersion, frightened almost to death's door. Can she be left to perish of exposure outside the monastery walls?

Be assured the good Abbot of this community will not turn the slave adrift into the black night. He has an expedient to meet the double difficulty of the case. He will not lodge the girl in the monastery, but he will seek accommodation for her in some peasant household of the neighbourhood. Accordingly he, with two of the brethren, knocked up several families in succession, some of whom received them gruffly, annoyed at being disturbed at so late an hour, while others said they had not room enough for themselves and their children; but at length a widow was found who welcomed them in her poverty. "Why should she not," she said, "give shelter to a child of the Great Provider, Who gave her own cottage roof?"

Zeta, seated by the embers of a smouldering log of wood, told the story of her life and her adventures to this simple woman, and, in return, received the confidences of a not uneventful career; and so absorbed were they in conversation that they were insensible to the flight of time, and were surprised by the rays of the rising sun, as they came streaming in through the only aperture that gave light and air to the room.

"I must hurry away," said Zeta, "before the city is astir. I shall be watched, and may be captured, if I wait till the streets are filled with people."

"Do you forget," said the woman, "that you are five miles from the city, and that, if you start on your journey now, the world will be awake before you are half the way home."

"But I am very active. May I not run the whole way?"

"And be looked upon as mad by some early riser, and perhaps pursued by the dogs as a nocturnal thief."

"What, then, am I to do?" asked Zeta, in anguish. "My dying master will think that I have forgotten him, or run away; and I long to tell him that I have been and will be faithful to him unto death."

"And you shall tell him," said the woman, "before the sun goes down. You shall come with me to the city. I go in to sell some green figs in the early market, the fruit of my solitary tree. You shall wear my Sunday dress: and no one will suspect that you are anything but a peasant's child."

Zeta would have thanked the kind creature, but she gave her no opportunity: for at once she began to bustle about the house, preparing some coarse bread and a vessel of goat's milk for their breakfast; and when she had completed the preparation, she continued: "And besides the pleasure of a quiet walk by the beautiful river, you will be pleased to see the fruit market in the Forum of Constantine, which many a dweller in the city never sees: it is so early. And O," she added, "how you will love the beautiful fruit! Had I a dozen fig trees, instead of one, I should be the

happiest woman in the world ; to sell my fruit in such a place and in such company."

A fruit market is an institution that is very like itself in every country, and, it may be supposed, even in every age ; and consequently there is nothing special to be said about that to which Zeta and the peasant woman hurried at early dawn. The produce of that soil and climate—oranges, citrons, figs, melons, apricots, and a variety of others—were exposed on every side, and were offered vociferously for sale by the descendants of the early Byzantines. And when the slave and her companion arrived at the forum the business was at its height. Having waited until her companion laid down her little basket of figs and took her stand beside it, Zeta was about to set off for home when her attention was attracted by a group of men, who stood quite near, and were engaged in an animated conversation.

"So the courtier Andrimades," said the first speaker, "has at length forfeited the favour of the Court. Who could have anticipated that a man of his rank would be dragged through the city like a felon?"

"Yet his crime was but a trivial one," said another—"a matter of poaching in the Emperor's forest."

"It is the ostensible crime, you should say," interposed a third. "His real fault, and the cause of his disgrace, is his complicity with Ignatius' party in the city."

"You say so?" exclaimed the first speaker.

"On authority," answered the last.

"I believe you to be misinformed," said he who had spoken second. "Andrimades is not the man to busy himself with theological questions."

"Latterly," said the third, "he has changed a good deal. They attribute it to an attachment he has formed for a young orthodox maiden of an unpretending plebeian family."

"Andrimades!" cried both simultaneously.

"Neither more nor less," said number three. "And to speak plainly, though I give it to you as a profound secret, it was his mad pursuit of this girl that was the immediate cause of his arrest."

First Speaker: "Be so good as to explain."

Second Speaker: "It is known that the parents of this girl are of Photius' party: her father is in the employment of the Emperor's head groom. Great severity has been used with a view to detaching this girl from Ignatius' side, but to no effect. She resisted entreaty, threats, severity. So continuous, however, was the persecution to which she was subjected, that she determined to fly from her home and seek an asylum among some religious women of Ignatius' party who live in community somewhere down the Bosphorus. In attempting to carry out this design she was assisted by her admirer, Andrimades. He provided horses and an escort for her flight. The plan transpired before it was fully matured. The girl, in despair, drowned herself; and Andrimades was arrested on a charge of aiding the enemies of Photius, the Emperor's friend."

First Speaker: "How extraordinary! This man has the reputation of being a gourmand,

nothing more ; and here he turns up in the character of a Cyprian, after his conversion."

Third Speaker : "If you live many years you will hear of more astonishing events than the conversion of Andrimades."

This conversation was a source of some amusement to Zeta ; notwithstanding which it left a painful impression on her mind. She concluded from it that the city was agitated by rumours of her pursuit and the adventure which had befallen her. Though for the time it had taken a grotesque shape, the real facts of the case must at last become known ; and this would be both painful to herself and would compromise her master, Theophylact. She would go home quickly ; she would tell the Turmarch all that had occurred ; she would beseech him, when he should have recovered from his illness, to send her out of the city, for a time at least ; and until he should find himself able to do so she would hide herself and never appear in public.

Full of these resolves, she thanked the kind widow for her protection, bade her an affectionate good-bye, and proceeded through the less frequented streets to the house of Theophylact, where she found the clergy of St. Paul's Monastery already in attendance on her sick master.

CHAPTER XVII.

IGNATIUS AND THE COUNCIL—PHOTIUS AND THE POPE.

AFTER a long and fatiguing journey, Arsabas, ambassador of the Emperor of the East to Pope Nicholas I., accompanied by the Metropolitans, Methodius of Gaugres and Samuel of Colossus, with other ecclesiastics of high rank, arrived in Rome, were presented to the Pope, and disclosed the object of their mission. They were sent to lay before the Pontiff an account of the retirement of Ignatius from the Patriarchate of Constantinople and of the advancement of Photius to his position, to present him with two important letters bearing on this subject, to make some offerings at the shrine of St. Peter in the name of Michael III. and Photius, and to request his Holiness to send legates to Constantinople, for the purpose of helping the present Patriarch to extinguish the last sparks of the Iconoclastic schism which was smouldering in some places, and might again rise into an active flame.

The Pope received them civilly: he thanked them for their gifts, but he told them pointedly that he had received no communication from Ignatius on the subject that brought them to Rome. He, however, a few days after called together a number of Bishops and some priests of the Roman Church, and put before them the letters of Photius

and Michael, expressing to them his own conviction that these letters did not tell the whole story of the object or causes of the change of Patriarch in the Eastern city ; and he asked for their advice as to the expediency of sending legates to Constantinople to inquire into all the circumstances surrounding this extraordinary case. The advice they tendered was unanimous and given without hesitation : that delegates should be chosen from the Bishops present, and despatched to Constantinople without delay, and on their arrival should preside, in the Pope's name, over a Council of Bishops, summoned to discuss the present position of Iconoclasm, and to consider the reason of the retirement of Ignatius and the cause of the promotion of the man who occupied his place. Pope Nicholas, adopting the advice of his Council, appointed the Bishops Rodoaldus and Zachary as his delegates for Constantinople, and sent them away on their mission, telling them that their action was to be only inquisitorial : they were to inquire why it was that Ignatius had gone, and why Photius had taken his place ; to examine witnesses ; to give a full hearing to both sides in the dispute ; but to make no decree or decision, and merely to bring back to Rome all the information they could glean on the important subject of the succession to the Patriarchate. Two letters were delivered to them by the Pope : one for the Emperor, the other for Photius.

In his letter to the Emperor the Pope complained that "the last Council of Constantinople had deposed Ignatius without consulting the Holy

See, while it was clear, from the Emperor's letter, that he had not been proved guilty of any crime, either by judicial process or his own admission ; that a layman had been chosen to fill the vacant Episcopal chair, which is against the Canons and the decretals of various Popes." He added : " We cannot give our sanction to such proceedings off-hand : we must be first informed by our legates of all that has happened in connexion with this affair. Ignatius must come before them and a Council of Bishops, that he may be asked why it was that he left his flock, in order that they may see whether his deposition has been in accordance with the Canons. When all particulars shall have been laid before us, we will determine what is to be done for the peace of your Church."

In his letter to Photius he wrote : " I admit your profession of faith to be correct ; but I condemn your ordination as irregular. My legates, after their return from your city, will make me fully acquainted with your conduct throughout, and your bearing in the matter of the Faith."

These Roman letters, so self-assertive and outspoken, were anything but pleasing to the Greek intriguers to whom they were addressed ; but, for a while, they dissembled and concealed their annoyance. They received the bearers of them with outward respect, placed at their disposal comfortable quarters suitable to their rank, and made them a promise that, in obedience to the Pope's request, a Synod of Bishops should be brought together with as little delay as possible.

Weeks passed by and no synod was called.

Rodoaldus and Zachary felt themselves isolated, and began to fear that they were imprisoned as well. They had not seen a single friend of Ignatius' since they had come to the city, nor anyone to say a word in his favour ; while, day after day, they were wearied with hearing the virtues of Photius, and his disinterestedness proclaimed by those who surrounded or visited them. They bore this treatment patiently for three months, but at the end of that time they began to complain. They were told in reply, very positively, that they had not been summoned to Constantinople to be judges in the dispute between the Patriarchs, or even to hear the depositions of the parties engaged in it, but to decide absolutely in favour of Photius ; and when they pleaded that they could not so decide, and that any judicial pronouncement would be in excess of their instructions, they were threatened with banishment to the most remote region of the Empire, misery of every kind, starvation and perpetual imprisonment, and were assured that, in the end, they would be brought so low that they would be glad to pick up and devour the most loathsome creeping things that were to be found in the dark dungeons to which they would be consigned.

These legates of Pope Nicholas were not of the heroic type : they could suffer, and they did ; but they were not prepared for martyrdom. Five additional weary months passed over them, and at the end of that time (that is, eight months after they had arrived in Constantinople) they began to show symptoms of weakness. Their position was

a desperate one, and in their distress the domestic enemy, "self love," came to their aid. Why should they prolong a hopeless struggle? Why should they lay down their lives for a disciplinary dispute in a local Church? No point of faith was put in danger by this contest, nor any broad principle of the moral law; they would please the Emperor by yielding, and perhaps, in this fearful dilemma, they would not much displease the Pope. Little by little they gave way, convincing themselves at last that they were doing a prudent thing in retiring from the contest. It ended in their conceding everything, and promising that if a Council of Bishops were assembled to adjudicate between the claimants to the Patriarchate, they would be, whatever the event, on the side of Photius, and would give their sanction, in the name of the Pope and as his representatives, to the decision of the Fathers in his favour.

After the fall of the Pope's legates—for their adoption of the views of Photius and his abettors on the succession to the Patriarchate was a great descent from the high path of impartiality which they had been ordered by the Pope to follow—a citation to a Council was served without delay on the Bishops and Metropolitans ruling the cities and towns of these provinces; and these, to the number of three hundred and eighteen, set out, some on horseback, others on foot; some along the public roads, others on the cross-paths of the country; some with a train of followers, others alone, for the Imperial city. There was triumph on the faces of some of them, who had been or-

dained by Photius ; but the larger number, who had passed under the hands of Ignatius, seemed dejected and depressed, as if they were unwilling instruments in the hands of another for the perpetration of an injustice which they knew was on the eve of accomplishment. Arriving at the city gates they glided through them in parties of two or more, and met on every side signs of preparation for the Council as they passed through the streets of the capital. Soldiers were drawn up in line ; chamberlains were hurrying to and fro ; anxious crowds were gossiping at the street corners ; and a great hum of excitement was abroad. A few days after, when all had arrived, and the preparations for the opening of the Council were complete, another tableau of equal interest was presented in the procession of the prelates through the gay and busy streets, the advance of the Emperor towards the Church of the Twelve Apostles, surrounded by senators, magistrates, and the officers of his Household ; and, finally, by the Council chamber itself, filled with costumes of many shapes and hues, from the Imperial robes glittering with jewels to the sable habit of the cloistered monk.

After the usual preliminaries, the Council was declared open, and the Bishops sat in solemn silence, waiting for the coming of Ignatius, who had been summoned to appear before them.

The delay was considerable, for Ignatius demurred to the first call.

"How shall I go?" said he to the provost Behanes, who cited him ; "and what garb shall

I wear? Shall I present myself as a Bishop, as a priest only, or as a monk?"

"The legates of the ancient See of Rome," replied Behanes, "command you to appear in whatever dress you please."

"Then," said Ignatius, "I shall put on the robes of a Bishop."

Whereupon he retired for some minutes, and when he came forth, it was not in the dress of a Bishop only that he appeared, but in the gorgeous habiliments of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Clothed in this fashion, accompanied and surrounded by bishops, priests, monks, and laymen, he started on foot for the Church of the Holy Apostles; but he had not gone half the way when he was met by a patrician, who stopped him and said:

"The Emperor forbids you, under pain of death, to appear before the Council in any other dress than that of a simple monk."

"The Emperor shall be obeyed," said Ignatius. "I will return whence I have come, and when I shall have put on the cowl and habit I shall not loiter, but hasten to present myself before the Fathers in council."

One would naturally expect that this submission and humility would receive a reward, and that the obedience of the distinguished prelate would be met half-way by the civility of the Emperor and his train. But it was not so. On arriving at the Church of the Apostles he was covered with reproaches by the Emperor's attendants. The first to attack him were a priest named Laurence and

two men named Stephen, one of whom was a sub-deacon.

"How did you dare," said they, "to clothe yourself in the Pontifical garb? You, who have been condemned and deposed for so many and such various crimes."

Saying which, they carried him off from the clerical and lay friends that were with him, and brought him before the Emperor, who inveighed against him in loud and scathing language, until the holy man meekly said :

"Your insults I can bear. They are light and trivial, when compared to the torments I have had to endure."

"Be seated on that bench," said the Emperor, changing his tone, "and say to me what you will. I believe that you have suffered much, though I attribute your trials to your own obstinacy."

"I have nothing to tell you, August one, that you do not already know ; and as for my sufferings, you have been, with Photius and Cæsar, the active cause of them."

"Well, well," said the Emperor, waving his arm impatiently, "no more of this. Have you any favour to ask that I can reasonably grant?"

"Yes, that I may speak to the legates of the Bishop of Rome alone, or in your presence."

"Call these legates before me," said the Emperor, addressing an officer of the Court who was in attendance on him. "Now," said he, turning to Ignatius, "you can put questions to these dignitaries on any subject ; but be cautious and reserved."

"Tell me," said Ignatius, addressing the legates, "what has brought you from Rome to Constantinople, and who has summoned you hither."

"We have not been summoned. We are the legates of Pope Nicholas. He it is who has sent us here to sit in judgment upon you."

"But he has not communicated with me," said Ignatius. "Are you bearers of letters for me from the Pope?"

"We have no letters for you. Why should we have? You are no longer regarded as Patriarch, but as one deposed canonically by a Provincial Council; but we are prepared to take up your case, and to discuss it juridically."

"Begin," said Ignatius, "by putting the usurper of my See to flight, or abandon your position as judges."

An effort was then made by those who were in attendance on the Emperor to induce Ignatius to renounce the Patriarchate by a formal act. They besought him to do so; they threatened him, in the name of the Emperor, if he should not. He was inexorable. They then turned their attention to the Metropolitans who adhered to him, and said to them: "You would, under certain conditions, have assented to the deposition of this man, and now you demand him as Patriarch."

The Metropolitans replied: "Of two evils that threatened, the anger of the Emperor and the rising of the people in revolt, we have chosen the less. But this is not to the point. Give back the See to the legitimate Patriarch, and cease to trouble yourselves about us."

After another appeal to Ignatius to resign, that Photius might continue in peaceable possession of the Patriarchate, it became quite evident that, for the present at least, no settlement could be made, as he would yield neither to entreaty nor to threat. Hence the Fathers suspended the Council, and the first session terminated. Immediately afterwards Ignatius sent the following letter to the Papal legates :

“You have not driven away the usurper, but you sit at his table, and have received presents from him—clothes and reliquaries. I do not look upon you as judges. Take me to the Pope, and I will submit to his sentence, whatever it may be.”

During the two days following the suspension of the Council pressure was put on Ignatius in various ways, with a view to extort from him a written or verbal consent to retire ; but all was to no purpose : he did not waver for a moment in his resolve to maintain his right to his See and to the Patriarchal dignity attached to it.

The Fathers met again on the third day, and summoned him to appear before them. He refused to go ; and sent the following reply in explanation of his conduct : “You don’t appear to have studied the Canons, for the rule of law is that when a Bishop is summoned before a Council he is cited by two Bishops three times ; and you have cited me through two persons, one of whom is a deacon and the other a layman.”

“But you are not even a Bishop,” said the Fathers, in reply ; “for there are persons here who are ready to swear that you have been ordained without a decree of election.”

“Who are they?” demanded Ignatius. “Who will believe their statements? If I am not ordained validly, the Emperor is not emperor, the Bishops are not all bishops, for most of them have passed under my unworthy hands. If the usurper was of the Church, I might, perhaps, resign my See to him; but how could I allow one from outside to be made pastor of the flock of Our Lord? He is of the excommunicated and anathematised; he has been taken from among the laity, and ordained by a man who is deposed and cut off from the Church. When he persuaded the Metropolitans to accept him, he made them a promise in writing, and confirmed it by an oath that he would perform no episcopal act without my consent. Yet forty days later he publicly deposed and anathematised me in my absence.”

This interchange of views was effected through messengers going from the Council chamber to the residence of Ignatius. The answers of the Patriarch did not please the Fathers. They had come together to condemn him, and they found themselves engaged in an argument with him, of which he evidently had the better. They would take other and stronger measures with him: as he had refused to answer their summons, they would bring him a prisoner before them, and would wrest from him by violence the office which he would not voluntarily resign.

Accordingly, on the tenth day after the opening of the Council, Ignatius was brought a prisoner before the Fathers. Seventy-two witnesses came forward to testify against him on charges previously

prepared. Among them were two patricians, Leo Creticus and Theodotus, who stated that he had been ordained without a decree of election. The thirtieth of the Apostolic Canons was read, which says: "If a Bishop makes use of the secular power to put himself in possession of a See, he shall be deposed and excommunicated." The latter part of the Canon, which ordains that "those who hold communion with him shall suffer the same penalties," was omitted.

A hurried and foregone conclusion was come to: the prisoner was found guilty, and his sentence of deposition was pronounced. A signal was given to Procopius, a sub-deacon, who stood by. He advanced upon the Patriarch from behind, and raising the pallium from his neck, removed it, pronouncing the word "Unworthy." He then took off, one by one, all the episcopal habiliments, using the same expression in the removal of each, while the Bishops of the Council and the Papal legates echoed the expression, as an evidence of their concurrence in the proceeding. When the insignia of his rank and the dress which he wore as a Bishop of the Church had been all taken away, Ignatius, the Emperor's son, the venerated Abbot, monk, and Bishop, the leader in rank and jurisdiction of the Oriental Church, stood before the Council in rags, which formed his under-clothing, and which he had been forced to put on by those who dragged him a prisoner from his house.

After this last scene and the dispersion of the Bishops who were witnesses to it, as well as approvers of its barbarity, the triumph of the

usurper seemed to be complete : and yet he was not satisfied, nor devoid of fear. He dismissed the legates, giving them some presents for the Pope, and telling them to inform his Holiness that Ignatius had been deposed, and that his own election had been confirmed. But not satisfied with this oral message, he sent, a few days later, a long letter to Rome, which, as a specimen of ancient artifice and special pleading, is worthy of being presented to the reader :

“ There is nothing more valuable than charity, which binds the father to his children, the friend to his friends, and which creates a bond between those who are far asunder. It is this that has enabled me to endure the lively reproaches of your Holiness, and to attribute them, not to an emotion of passion, but to your zeal for Church discipline. But, making use of the prudence of speech that ought to obtain between brothers, as well as between fathers and their children, I write to you for the purpose of defending myself, but not of disputing with you. Instead of reproving, you ought to have pity on me ; since I have been forced into my present position. God, from whom nothing is hidden, knows the violent treatment I have endured. They have put me in prison ; they have set guards upon me : they have elected me against my will. I have wept ; I have fought against fate ; I have been in dire affliction. Am I not, therefore, entitled to receive comfort rather than censure ? I have lost peace of mind, and the sweetness of home life, in the midst of a crowd of learned friends, taken up with the study of philos-

ophy and the sciences, and with the investigation of truth. I have had no base associations ; but, on the contrary, the high character of my old friends has brought me hosts of others. It was one of my privileges to go often to the Imperial Palace ; my friends accompanied me, and we stayed there as long as we pleased. I have forfeited all these pleasures, and this is the reason why my tears flow. I knew, even before I had experience of it, the cares and embarrassments of the place I now occupy, the indocility of the people, their rebellious temperament, and their insolence to their superiors. They murmur if you refuse them what they ask ; if you grant it they despise you, thinking they have gained it by their forwardness. I must always appear what I am not ; gay when I am sad, angry when I am even-minded : I must assume an expression of face, instead of the natural one I was accustomed to have when with my friends. I must, in my position, often reprove those who are dear to me, treat my relations with disdain, be severe to sinners, and bring upon myself hatred from every side. What have I not endured in combating simony, the abuse of conversing in the sacred edifices and the spirit which makes men neglect salvation for worldly interests ? All these I have foreseen, and this prevision it was which made me take to flight.

“ But what is the good of committing these matters to writing ? People do me a wrong in not pitying me, if they believe what I say ; and if they do not believe me, they equally do me a wrong, because I speak but the truth.

“But someone may say you should not have permitted violence to be done to you. From whom should I have taken it, except from those who have inflicted it? But the Canons have been violated; those, in particular, which forbid a laic to be raised to the Episcopacy. Who has violated them—he who has done the violence, or he who has suffered it? But you should have resisted. I have resisted more than I was in duty bound; and I would have resisted unto death if I had not been afraid of more serious consequences.”

He then enters upon the point made against him of having been raised from the secular to the episcopal state without having served in the ministry. “Far from making it a reproach to those who from laics have been made Bishops, we should give them praise for having led such holy lives as to make them preferable to those who were already in the priesthood. It is not the dress, nor the cut of the hair, nor length of time, but good morals that make one worthy of the Episcopacy. I do not say for myself that I have had these good morals, nor that I have borne the habit, but I say it for my great-uncle, Taræsius, and for Nicephorus. I say it for Ambrose, whom the Latins would not have the hardihood to condemn, for he is the glory of their side of the world and the writer of a great number of useful treatises. Nor should anyone condemn Nectarius, unless he be prepared to condemn with him the General Council that confirmed his ordination. And all those whom I have named were not only laymen, but they were not even baptised when they were chosen for the Epis-

copacy. I need not speak of Gregory, the father of theology; of Thalassus of Cæsarea, nor of the very many others against whom, though they were promoted in this way, it was never made a subject of reproach.

“I do not write thus by way of disputing with you, for I have in a full Council ordained that henceforth neither layman nor monk shall be ordained Bishop unless he have passed through all the grades first : for I am always ready to remove a subject of scandal when I can do so without hurt. It would be doing an injury to our predecessors to make the rule you observe retrospective, but there is no inconvenience in making it a law for the future. And would to God that the Church of Constantinople had always observed it ! I should have escaped the troubles that overwhelm me. I am surrounded by impious men, of whom some outrage Jesus Christ in his images, others confound the natures in Jesus Christ, or do not admit them, or introduce a new one, or make little of the Fourth General Council. I make war upon them, and have brought many to submission ; but there are among them foxes, who come out of their holes and take the foolish by surprise : these are the schismatics, who are more to be feared than open enemies. I have crushed them by the decree of a Council to which you have made yourself a party in your legates ; and I have also promulgated many other decrees with the consent of the same. I would have adopted all your rules if the Emperor had not opposed me ; but I have thought it better, following the advice of your legates, to

let slip a portion of the Canons than to lose them all.

“I was near forgetting to say that as no person is under a greater obligation to observe the Canons than you are, you should not receive indiscriminately those who go hence to Rome without letters of recommendation. I am delighted that they go to kiss your feet, provided that they do not so to insult me. For many sinners adopt the pretence of making a pilgrimage to avoid the penances they deserve for their immorality, their thefts, their homicides and other crimes. You would make their evil projects of no avail if you sent back to this place those who come to you without letters from me.”

This remarkable letter did not make upon the Pope the impression that Photius expected. It was presented to Nicholas by Leo, an envoy from the Emperor Michael, who at the same time gave him two volumes, one containing the Acts of the deposition of Ignatius and the other the decrees of the late Council touching holy images. Leo also gave to the Pope a letter from the Emperor, which was an appeal for the confirmation of Photius.

After having read these letters and the Acts of the Council attentively, that Pope came to the conclusion that his legates had acted against the orders given them. He saw clearly that his letter to the Emperor had not been read in the first session of the Council; and that, in a later session, a part of it was read, but was so garbled as to appear not to regard Ignatius. From these premisses he inferred that the case had been disposed of before the

arrival of his legates, and that they had been used merely to confirm a foregone decision. Sensibly affected at their prevarication, he assembled the entire Roman Church, and in the presence of Leo declared that he had not sent them to depose Ignatius or to advance Photius to his place ; and that he had not consented, nor would consent, to one or the other.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A MEETING ON THE BOSPHORUS.

PHOTIUS, not knowing at the time the nature of the Pope's comment on his letter, or the proceedings that followed its reception in Rome, looked upon his position as fully secured by the decision of the Council, whose acts have been summarised in the last chapter, and gave himself a free hand in the elevation of his clerical friends, and the removal of such priests and bishops as were still favourable to his rival. Congratulations poured in upon him from every side ; his slaves and dependents were in great glee at his triumph ; but he could not avoid noticing that there was one member of his household, his ward and relative, who was a prey to anxiety and depression.

The heroine of this book, the Greek maiden of the ninth century, had been blessed with a home in every way suited to her tastes, refined, luxurious, literary, and full of peaceful love ; and years had been adding to her happiness when a dark shadow unexpectedly fell across its threshold, and the vision of domestic peace passed away like a dream.

Photius, her guardian, her heretofore affectionate relation, had changed. No longer talkative, cheery, and almost playful in manner, he had become silent and reserved. He was not unkind to her, and he sometimes excused himself for being

so dull and abstracted ; but it was quite evident to his ward that he had ceased for ever to be the Photius of old ; and she heaved a deep sigh when she thought of the severance of those dear home ties that had held her so long in a happy bondage.

She was, in her religious feelings, shocked at his ordination and intrusion into the See of her venerable friend, and grieved at his cruel treatment of Ignatius. Was she even justified, she sometimes asked herself, in remaining in a palace which was not his, though he had seized upon it and taken it to himself ? But what was she to do ? She had no home but his, and no friend from whom she could ask for more than a temporary hospitality. She had, however, the bright resource of youth : she would make the best use of her surroundings, and would not allow herself to be carried into the darkness of despair because another had wandered from the path of duty.

Her eyes fell upon the lovely Bosphorus, on whose placid waters she spent many hours with no company but that of her female slaves ; and there she found a repose of which the luxury of a palace had deprived her.

The turbaned Turk now holds the Bosphorus ; his ironclads lie at anchor on its placid waters ; he has built his showy city on the foundations of the capital of the second Roman Empire ; he is master of the East and of Constantinople. A traveller from Western Europe, entering the Bosphorus for the first time from the Sea of Marmora, is moved with curiosity to visit the last city of his continent and

the first within the zone of Mohammedanism ; and finds himself in a region peculiar in every way and unique. For, though he may have “done” the Rhine, with its handsome towns and ruined castles ; and the Rhone, with its narrow gorges and vine-clad hills ; and the Danube, with its rapids and mediæval relics, he has seen nothing like the Bosphorus, the city to which it leads, or the race of people holding sway there and blighting one of the fairest regions of the earth.

A fairy scene is unfolded to his eyes when he comes within view of the city of Constantinople. The showy head-dresses and varied costumes that meet his glance, as he looks towards the shore, give him a lively anticipation of mirth and bustle in the streets ; but the sullen gravity of the followers of “the Prophet” has fallen like a pall on the place, and its dwellers are dull, silent, and gloomy.

The country around is beautiful, but unkempt : it is, by nature, fertile ; but neither laid out nor cultivated as it deserves to be. The water-way alone is unspoiled by the hand of the invader, clear and deep and wide, as when it bore on its bosom the flotilla of three hundred galleys that went out in A.D. 1571 to annihilate the naval power of Western Europe—as when, centuries before, it bore the hosts of those who had devoted themselves to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre.

Alethea, in a trim boat, propelled by her usual attendants, was returning from the direction of the Propontis, along the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, after quietly enjoying the air and scenery, and

drinking in the freshness that came up from the limpid waters. For the inlet was fair and attractive in the middle of the ninth century, as it is in the end of the nineteenth. The Burgala, with its double peak, looked down on it from behind Chalcedon (the modern Scutari); the Giant's Hill and the Arganthonius, covered with oak forests, kept guard around it; and Olympus could be seen, far away to the west, covered with its white mantle of perpetual snow. The trees and shrubs that covered the banks and mounted the slopes on every side, the cyprus, the palm, the acacia, the pine, the fig tree, the mulberry, and numberless others with blended hues, gave it an aspect of unrivalled richness; and ships were riding at anchor laden with the produce of the East and West—modest structures, with oval hulls and simple sails, that must have had a hard time at sea in journeying to this emporium. There, too, were war-ships under the command of Oriphas, keeping watch against the approach of the Saracens by sea. High up lay the City of Constantine, rising in terraced beauty above the water; its palaces and the copper domes of its churches glistening under the rays of the afternoon sun.

Gliding over the sparkling waves, Alethea was fully alive to the charms of the scene; and though she had often admired the Bosphorus before, she thought it had never seemed so delightful; for the landscape had a freshness added to it by recent rains, while the odours of the revived shrubs and flowers were diffused over land and water. The atmosphere had been cooled down

to an agreeable temperature, and the sun peeped from behind purple cloudlets, his rays moderated by flimsy curtains of silver cloud, and the waters sparkled with intermittent light.

Beauties of nature, how you soften our trials and soothe the anxieties of our hearts, especially of those who are debarred from all enjoyment but that of contemplating you! Yet in our griefs you often leave us disconsolate.

She was interested in her surroundings, and pleased in a high degree with her excursion; but not so entirely absorbed as to lose sight of a trouble that had been near her heart ever since the day she had met Theophylact at Promettus, and had observed his changed and ghastly appearance. Perhaps it was of him she was thinking as she took a stringed instrument that lay beside her and sang to its accompaniment a plaintive melody.

As she sang, in a meditative mood, she was not conscious of the approach of a gilded barge, which put out from the shore at the opposite side of the stream, and was rowed rapidly across the water. It came up close behind her boat as the last strain of her music died away, and on looking round she beheld the Emperor Michael seated under an awning and gazing intently at her. He was the first to break silence.

"Holy wisdom!" said he, "do I recognise the ward of the Patriarch, so far from home, and at the mercy of the elements in so frail a bark?"

"The elements are propitious, Thrice August, and the water like a sheet of smooth silver."

"But the day turns," he said, "and any moment

may bring down a sweeping blast from the Giant Hill. The showers that have fallen are the fore-runners of high wind."

"I fear not, Lord Michael," said Alethea. "I have often paddled on these waters and never encountered a storm."

"Saints like you are lucky. I have often been obliged to fly for shelter to some deep nook on the coast."

"Are Providence, then, and the elements on the side of the weak?"

"Charming lady," he replied, "my galley is at your service. Come on board. I shall be immensely gratified by your company. I go to the Prince's Islands. The scenery is delightful; you will be pleased, and will bring back a double flush of health. Look," he added, "there are no slaves on board: I am rowed to-day by innocents, the sons of my faithful charioteers. Hasten to hear their animated prattle."

"I cannot accompany your Majesty," said Alethea firmly. "I dare not go with the Emperor."

"Well said, beautiful Judith — proudly and courageously said. But you are prudish, timid, and bashful because you live in retirement. You seldom come to Court, and when there you never leave the side of some wearisome dowager, or that pious relative of yours, Photius. Examine yourself and see whether your tastes are not whimsical, and your self-esteem exaggerated."

The girl was offended by the Emperor's outspoken coarseness, which was quite in accord with his disposition, sparing neither age nor sex; and

she would have motioned to her slaves to row on. But he showed no inclination to move away, and she had to wait until he resumed the conversation.

"Come," he said, "Rebecca. Trust yourself to the servant of Abraham. Don't hesitate; the Emperor takes all responsibility upon himself, and guarantees hospitable treatment and safe return. You cannot refuse him the first favour he has ever asked of you."

"I cannot go, August one," she said. "I thank you for the honour you would do me, but indeed I cannot go."

"I shall take no excuse," said Michael. "Pray do not oblige me to order you on board."

"Request and order are the same to me," she replied firmly. "If I could comply with the first, the latter would be unnecessary."

"If you persevere in refusing, pert maid," said Michael, "I shall insist on being put in possession of the reason why you decline my company."

"It would be painful to me to state it, Emperor. Is it considerate, then, in you to ask for it?"

"Spirits of darkness," said he, gruffly; "considerate or inconsiderate, I demand the reason of your refusal."

"O, then," said she, rising in courage and dignity, "you must fully understand yourself, if you reflect ever so little, that dissipation and reserve are seldom seen in company."

"I am the dissipated one?"

She inclined her head.

"And you are the reserved one?"

“ I have that reputation.”

“ Your language is insulting, Madam !”

“ You elicited it, in spite of my entreaties.”

“ I take the rebuke,” said he, bitterly, “ though I must not thank you for it. I should not have asked you to be my companion. I might have known that you have the religious obstinacy of my mother, whose associate, I believe, you are. But, remember, I did not spare even my mother when she crossed my path. Look out, my Dalilah ; for, as sure as my name is Michael, you shall be shorn of your locks and clothed in garments that will not show off your figure to such advantage as those you now wear, and this before long.”

His parting shot, as he was being rowed away, sent a pang through the frame of the candid girl. A sigh, a spasm of the heart, a twitching of the muscles of the face, and she was herself again. “ Not that I fear his threats,” thought she, “ though I know how cruel he can be even to a defenceless woman ; but it seems contamination to converse with such a man. Ah me ! how unprotected women are in this city, when our dear Patriarch, who alone had the courage to defend them, is in exile, a helpless and persecuted prisoner.”

Brooding over this unpleasant incident, and with downcast eyes, she neither saw nor heard signals that came from a half-covered gondola that was moored near the shore, under the shade of a lofty palm tree ; but instantly on being roused from her reverie she ordered her maids to row to the spot whence the signs and voices came.

"A soldier whom we carry has fainted," said a rower, "and he has been senseless for a long time ; we are afraid that he will die while in our charge. Have you, noble lady, perfumes which we might pour on his face, or essences wherewith to touch his tongue: for we, poor men, know not what to do to bring him back to life."

Without a moment's hesitation she left her own boat and entered that of the sick man ; and going close up to his side, she bent over him with interest and compassion. She did not at once recognise him, for all colour had gone from his face, and he was covered by a mantle, which fell in large folds over his figure ; but, on looking keenly into those features, never forgotten since the first day she beheld them, she was visibly moved, and turning to the rowers she said : "Can it be as I fear ? Is he the Turmarch Theophylact ? O, how sad !" she added in a tremulous tone. "He breathes not. Has his spirit indeed fled ?"

She was still gazing at him, with difficulty concealing her emotion, when the twitching of an eyelid stirred her to activity, for it told her that he was not yet dead. She seized his helpless hand and chafed it tenderly between her own ; she wiped off the beads of cold sweat that covered his forehead ; she took a jewelled cross from her bosom and pressed it to his cold lips, and whispered words unheard by those around. As she spoke, he came out of his swoon and opened his eyes slowly, fixing them on her with a look of wonder and surprise.

"My nurse Zeta," said he, in the tone of one

but half awake. Then more collectedly : " Am I in a dream ? It is not Zeta. Surely not the Lady Alethea ? "

" Yes," she said, blushing, " I was passing by chance when you fainted."

" Not by chance," said he, " but providentially. I should have died if you had not been here. It was your voice that called me back."

" Not my voice," she answered, " but the cross I laid upon your lips. As for my muttered words, they could not have been heard by you."

" Words of deep feeling. I heard them all, and I could not resist the invitation they conveyed."

" They were said in alarm, and not with pre-meditation."

" The more precious," said he faintly ; " I can never forget them."

" You weary yourself," she said hurriedly. " You want repose. I will sit by you, and you can regard me as your nurse until you arrive in the city."

Slowly they paddled up the stream, every dip of the oars bringing a thrill of pleasure to Alethea, as they soothed and lulled her invalid into a now safe and peaceful slumber. She watched every shadow that passed over his face, and counted the respirations that came from his pale lips. When they came to the landing-stage she rose to depart, saying quietly and without visible emotion :

" I leave you. We have arrived at the city. You are now safe from danger. Do not again venture on the water until you have gained an increase of strength. I was frightened : I was never before this time within view of death.

Forgive my indiscretion and forget my hasty words. Farewell."

Before he could reply she was in her boat and already at some distance.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SLAVE GIRL'S SECOND JOURNEY : HER CAPTURE.

THEOPHYLACT seemed to have passed the crisis of his sickness on the Bosphorus, and within a month had regained his usual health and vigour. His first wish after recovery was to provide for the safety of his slave, now doubly esteemed for her courage and fidelity to him. She had asked him to send her away to the country for some time and he now wrote to Melanus for permission to send her to his country house, which was situated four miles to the north-west of the city, in a retired and little frequented neighbourhood.

The messenger who bore this letter returned with a favourable answer ; but as he was entering the house of Theophylact he was addressed by a stout and vulgar looking man in patrician attire, who said to him :

"Your master, I hope, gains strength. By the way, he ought to send his beautiful slave to a place of safety in the mountains, or towards the Euxine. She will be soon looked for again."

"Right," said the slave ; "she goes over the plains to-morrow to the north-west."

"Not a day too soon," said the stranger, as he turned away chuckling with suppressed laughter.

In the afternoon of the day following Zeta went secretly out of her master's house and took the

least frequented streets that led to the city gate of Adrianople, through which she passed out into the country, her destination being the villa of the patrician Melanus. Brave girl as she was, Theophylact gave her a protector in the form of a large hound that had often accompanied him on the field of battle ; for there were still wild animals in the forests by the way she was to travel, and other manifest dangers for a young and fair girl alone on so long a journey.

She saw as she went along that the clouds were flitting rapidly across the sky, and from her observation, crude as it was in consequence of her small experience, she thought that the torn cloudlets predicted inclement weather ; but as she listened to the gentle sighing of the wind creeping among the leaves and murmuring towards the river banks, whispering quietly through the foliage of the stirring trees, and striking on her ear like the echo of a familiar voice with rather a soothing effect than the contrary, she felt encouraged to go on and trust herself to the mercies of the elements.

But the elements were not propitious, and she had not travelled more than a third of the way to her destination when the wind rose into a gale, and the rain fell heavily upon the earth flooding the fields around and the path before her. She stopped and entered a deserted building hard by, which had enough of its roof and walls remaining to afford her shelter from the pitiless downpour and protection from the fury of the storm. Here she remained until the convulsion ceased, when

she went forth, but stood for some time still and irresolute, considering whether she should continue her journey or return as quickly as she could to the city. But soon her doubt was dispelled by the conduct of her canine companion, who, as if he scented game in front, began to travel slowly forward, looking round at her now and again with a wistful look, as if he would bid her follow with confidence.

But hours had sped by since she had left home. Evening was now far advanced, night was approaching, and the hour had come in which the prowlers of the night emerge from their haunts or dens. At that time the country lying near Constantinople to the north and north-west was infested by the beasts of the wild, which came under the cover of darkness into the suburbs, and sometimes even within the city walls, in search of prey, and to pick up such garbage as lay about. She had not gone far when she felt something brush against her dress, and was startled at hearing the low bark of a passing wolf; but the surprise she had received was turned to terror as the sounds of a death struggle fell upon her ears. For her faithful hound had thrown himself on the receding brute and was striving to choke him or tear him to pieces. He had met with a formidable adversary, she thought, from the din that rose upon the night air.

How long the fight went on she could not calculate, as she stood trembling; but after some time she became conscious that the wolf was down and choking. Suddenly there arose a cry so shrill, so

piercing, so like the dying shriek of a human being perishing by a violent death, that it rang through the still air like a call for help. It was answered by a rushing and barking on every side: from the path behind and before her, from the underwood, from the plain, from the river bank came the answer to that death call; and from the barkings heard on every side it was clear that the district was alive with wolves.

What was she to do? To rush to the defence of her combatant was her impulse, but she would have been torn to pieces in a moment. She groped around, and happening to lay her hand on the stout inclining limb of a tree, she mounted it and crept along it, ascending until she came to a cross limb, when she seated herself with a sense of comparative security. Suddenly a flash, like that of lightning, lit up the glade and showed her the form of her great dog being torn to pieces by innumerable yelping brutes. Another flash from the wood to the left, and then flash after flash, until presently a party of men bearing torches emerged into the open. They seemed to have come from the "Great Road," and to be attracted to the place where she was by the sounds of the fray.

She cried out for help as they came near, and her agonising scream was answered by the hoarse laugh of the leader of the party, who, looking up and recognising her, said, in mingled accents of joy and banter:

"What a lucky dog I am! The Emperor will love me. Come down: we have been searching for you these two hours; unhappy hours which I

should have spent at the table. Come quickly, we will give you a torchlight procession into the city, and a funereal one to the Palace."

A hurried glance at the speaker and she recognised the man who had tried so hard to capture her a month before, on the bank of the Bosphorus: for it was Andrimades who, at the intercession of Photius, worked upon by Alethea, had been pardoned by the Emperor, who, in another fit of folly, sent him again in "pursuit of human game," "merely for the purpose of finding if it could be caught without noise or notice."

"My respects to you!" he continued, "and my thanks to you for falling into the net so quietly. I was afraid you would float up into the air, like a bird, as you floated when last I met you, on the water, like a spirit. Don't be afraid, I will bring you along tenderly, and no one the wiser; for we will extinguish our torches before we reach the city. Then to the Palace, where a madman will glance at you and let you go your way."

"Kill me," said she, "before you take me to that wretched man, the ruler of the Empire. Ah!" she continued, "by the love you bear your own daughter."

"Horses of St. Mark," said he, "I have no daughter, unless I adopt you. Or another relation might be preferable."

"By the memory, then, of your father——."

"My illustrious father, a born patrician, a hereditary landowner! *His* memory is dear to me, sure enough. You have hit the mark, you have touched a chord that vibrates. Stand aside, men!

and let me speak a few words unheard to this silly girl, to convince her that I must do my duty. What would you have me do?" said he, stooping to the girl. "I should have been sent a prisoner to the mountains a month ago, or I might have lost my ear or my nose for failing to bring you in but for the influence of a woman of rank."

"Who may be this grand lady that saved you? If she could rescue a great patrician from banishment or mutilation, she could, of a surety, save an humble little slave from the hunter."

"Her name is Alethea; she is the ward of the Patriarch Photius. Her influence is through her relative, whose word is all powerful with the Emperor."

"Then take me to her," pleaded Zeta. "The midnight hour is approaching: the Palace is shut up for the night. She will give me shelter, and no blame will attach to you, as you will have put me in safe keeping."

"Enough," said Andrimades. "It shall be as you demand."

He returned to his followers, muttering in an undertone:

"I have been out too late: I am hungry, I am thirsty. If I went to that accursed Palace I should be kept wandering around its dark walls until daylight. I will go home; I will have a comfortable little meal, and if I don't finish with a bumper of the best Chian, my name is not Andrimades."

CHAPTER XX.

ALETHEA AND ZETA : A CONFIDENCE.

IT was after midnight when Andrimades and his party arrived in the city, and still later when he presented himself, with the slave in charge, at the door of the Patriarchal Palace. The janitor received him roughly, told him that the household had retired for the night, and was about to swing to the great door, when Andrimades interposed his burly figure and said, in a tone betwixt command and entreaty :

“What mean you, fellow ? Do you wish to crush a patrician to death ? A nice figure you would put before the Patriarch as he crosses the threshold in the morning—the mangled remains of an old friend !”

“What would you have me to do, noble Sir. Shall I summon the Patriarch, or tell him that an acquaintance awaits on him ?”

“That is exactly the thing you are not to do. Who told you that I wanted the Patriarch ?”

“And whom could you want but him ? Of a surety, you don’t call upon his ward, the Lady Alethea, in the middle of the night ?”

“Perhaps I do ; but that is no concern of yours. Summon one of the female attendants of the Lady Alethea, and I will give my commands to her.”

The doorkeeper, glad to escape from a dilemma, went in murmuring ; and a few minutes later a

young female slave presented herself to Andrimades, who was performing a sort of dancing movement in the porch for the removal of a chill which the unaccustomed exposure to the night air had brought on him. He greeted her with a noise which might have been described, with equal accuracy, as a grunt or a chuckle, and then said :

“ Is your mistress a good sleeper ? ”

The slave shook her head, but answered not.

“ Because,” said Andrimades, “ if she be not asleep she will be glad to see me.”

“ I have never seen your nobility in this place ; and the Lady Alethea sees no one but friends, and never at night ! ”

“ Pshaw ! ” said he. “ If she knew what I have for her she would see me at any time.”

“ Who shall I say has called ? ” inquired the slave.

“ An old courtier,” said Andrimades.

“ The name ? ” asked the slave.

“ No name,” replied Andrimades.

“ An old courtier without a name : is that the message ? ” asked the slave.

“ Not exactly. Did I say old ? If so, I made a mistake. Tell her that a courtier of distinguished appearance, well known in society, waits upon her, to deliver into her hands a treasure ; and that he is sorry to have come so late.”

“ Your excellency has brought the treasure ? ”

“ Don’t you see this girl ? ” said he, pointing to Zeta. “ Is she not a treasure ? ”

The slaves looked at each other and smiled. Then, without a word, the girl retired to the interior of the mansion.

Alethea heard with no little surprise that "a courtier, of distinguished appearance and well known in society," waited to see her in the porch, and her curiosity was aroused when she was told that he was bearer of a treasure as an offering for herself.

"And is he," she inquired, "of distinguished appearance?" for an idea crossed her mind that it might be Theophylact. "Is he straight, tall, and handsome?"

"The opposite, Lady, of what you describe: he is stout, middle sized, and far from distinguished in appearance."

"How is he dressed?" demanded Alethea.

"His dress," replied the slave, "accords with his figure. It is very odd: he wears a conical hat, a short cloak, jewelled shoes; and is covered with mud half up, as if he had been tramping through a morass."

"I am sure, from your description, that he is no other than that strange man, Andrimades, whom one meets everywhere. He has, you say, a treasure for me; have you seen it? What is it like?"

"It is so beautiful that I cannot describe it; you must see it yourself, and judge if it is worth your acceptance."

Alethea, without further questioning her attendant, passed into the hall and on to the porch, where she met Andrimades and his charge. A brief conversation took place, in which he explained to Alethea his motive for calling at that late hour, carefully suppressing the circumstances of the double pursuit and final capture, and merely

saying that he met his companion wandering in the country as he was returning from the chase, that he saved her from being devoured by wolves, and thought his best course was to put her into the hands of a rich and charitable lady for temporary protection.

"What a Christian act!" said Alethea. "How fatherly! How often it happens," she added, "that the real character of men is not known, and that those who are regarded as thoughtless or selfish have a high sense of responsibility."

"My heart is soft," said Andrimades, looking very foolish, and slowly retiring through the open door; "particularly," he soliloquised, "if there is a woman in the case."

Zeta, left thus unceremoniously, and at such an hour, in the mansion of a lady of high rank, felt quite abashed, and stood silent and timid gazing on the ground, until Alethea, recognising her as the girl she had seen in the Church of the Twelve Apostles praying, and whom she discovered to be the slave of Theophylact, welcomed her cordially, and beckoning to her to follow, led her to her own sleeping apartment. There she talked with her for a long time, and then committed her to the female slave in attendance, with an order to provide her a couch, not in a slave's apartment, but in a chamber near her own.

The arrival of Zeta in the Patriarchal Palace was a source of unfeigned pleasure to Alethea; and she was fully resolved to take an opportunity some day, while she was there, of sounding her as to the tastes and tendencies of her late master. A

chance of doing so came about much sooner than she had expected. The slave girl was beside her one day in her room, when she took her instrument and, after striking a prelude, chanted to a plaintive air certain improvised verses, in which the events which had lately taken place in the city were mystically and mournfully told. Suddenly turning her eyes upon Zeta, standing beside her, abstracted and entirely absorbed by the music of her song, she said to her :

"My poetry is an enigma, little slave ; you can form no idea of the meaning or application of it."

"How should I ?" said the other. "Or why should I presume to try. Yet there are parts of it that remind me of events that have been passing lately in this city."

"And what events, pray, can be brought to your mind by the pestiferous mist of which I sang ?"

"The poisoned doctrine that is spreading over town and country."

"You are more quick-witted than I took you to be, little one. Pray, what do you make of this solitary and imposing figure that stands erect among the fallen ones and calls on the dead to rise ?"

"I make him to be my master, my ransom, the great and noble Theophylact, who alone has breasted the flood of iniquity, and, by his brave example, has brought back many that were going astray."

"You are a veritable Daniel in your interpretation of words which I thought to be almost as obscure as the far-famed writing on the wall. If

I admit that your application of my poetry is correct, will you give me a full account of this valiant hero of yours, and of the occasion and circumstances that brought you into his service?"

"Most willingly will I answer any question you put to me on this or any other subject."

"How, then, did you come to be the slave of Theophylact?"

"He bought me at a public auction in the Forum of Constantine."

"And how did it happen that one so young and so fair, a Christian too, was put up to public competition?"

"The story is not a long one: I will tell it to you as fully as it has been made known to me. I was enslaved with an only brother in Bulgaria. My parents I knew not, and I do not remember having seen them even in my childhood. We were pagans, or without any belief in the true God, for we had been brought up in this way. You have heard, no doubt, of the conversion of Bulgaria to the Christian faith; our owner and master, among others, with his family, became a fervent Christian, and did all he could to bring his slaves within the fold of the Church. Though some would not be instructed, he fully succeeded in his effort with us. My brother died a short time after his conversion, and I was left alone in the world; but I dwelt with a good Christian family on their estate in the country, where I was away from all vice and temptation, and enabled, in the seclusion of the place, to mature my knowledge of religion.

"Days and months flew by rapidly, until one

dark night in winter a party of plundering Slavs fell suddenly and unexpectedly on the family and household of my master, and put the greater number of them to the sword, and carried the remainder (except myself, two old slave women, and three men, who had hidden ourselves until the thieves went away) into captivity. And now, when the family and owner of the place were dead or gone, the heirs to this good man, who were still pagans, and without pity, came on the scene, and made a public sale of all the corn and goods that remained, sending us (that is the men, the women, and myself) into Constantinople, to be sold in the public market-place to the highest bidder.

“I was submitted for sale to a dissolute crowd of buyers, and should have been purchased by the worst of them, only that the Turmarch came, as it seemed, quite accidentally, into the forum, and bought me over the heads of all who were competing for me. It was not that he wanted me, or that he had much money to throw away upon whims; but it was his Christian heart and mind, overflowing with compassion and goodness, that drove him to make this purchase.”

“How noble!” cried Alethea. “I can now fully understand your gratitude to this benefactor; and it would be no matter of surprise if this gratitude rose to a higher level, and even into love for the soldier.”

“No, said the slave quietly, “it has not risen to that. It might have been so, but it was not allowed. The Turmarch, by his reserved manners and even words discouraged the awakening of af-

fection in me, and my own sense of his greatness in comparison with my own lowliness gave me strength to suppress it."

"A beautiful story," said Alethea, "and equally creditable to its hero and to you. A difference of position so vast as that between a patrician and a slave is, no doubt, a reason for reserve; but where, as in this case, there is beneficence on one side and gratitude on the other, the heart too often asserts itself. But, think you, is this soldier without affection, or is there, as far as you have been able to observe, anyone of whom he thinks kindly?"

"His kindness is for every one in trouble or distress," said Zeta.

"True, as even I should know," said Alethea; "but as far as you have been able to see, is there anyone in particular whom he singularly esteems?"

"I could almost think so, from the words in which he spoke of a lady who had saved his life."

"Can it be that the Turmarch, strong as a lion, can owe so much to a weak woman?"

"It is so, unless he has been mistaken."

"Where did the adventure occur?"

"On the Bosphorus."

"What was the occasion of it? What the circumstances?"

"He was on the river in a boat. He fainted; was dying. The lady drew near, laid a cross on his lips, and straightway he turned back from his journey to the other world. He was travelling over a great plain, he said, and approaching a deep valley that was full of light. Every step was bringing him nearer to the verge, and he already

saw myriads of translucent beings disporting themselves in the depths beneath. Just as he was on the point of being drawn into the abyss he heard a voice coming from behind, and calling on him by name to return. He could not but turn at that voice; the vision gradually melted away; life came back to his frame; he slowly opened his eyes, and saw leaning over him the face and figure of a lady, as beautiful as any he had seen in his dream. If he is attached to anyone on earth, it is to that lady."

"Who may she be, Zeta?"

"I do not know"

"Not even her name?"

"No."

"And what, pray, did he say about her?"

"That she was beautiful and good, and never to be forgotten."

"We will pass on to another subject. You have been found wandering in the country. Now, tell me, Zeta, were you flying from the Turmarch, who has been kind to you; or did he send you away to direct your steps back to your old home in Bulgaria?"

Zeta related to her, in detail, all the circumstances of her double pursuit and ultimate capture, informing her of the part Andrimades had played in it; and assuring her, on the authority of the last mentioned, that the entire proceedings were the result of a whim of the Emperor, who took up the idea of a hunt for his amusement and that he might make it a subject of laughter with his buffoons.

Alethea did not conceal her disgust and indignation at hearing of such reckless conduct, and told the slave decisively that she would put her again, after a few days, on the road to Melanus' villa, disguised in such a way that she could not possibly be recognised or taken.

"But I have promised Andrimades," pleaded the slave, "that I will make no attempt to escape, but will remain under your roof until liberated by order of the Emperor."

"As for that promise," replied Alethea, "it may be set aside. The Emperor's whim has passed over before this time, or has been converted into indignation with Andrimades for having carried out his wishes both clumsily and unsuccessfully. The Emperor would now assuredly wish you to be out of the way, and that no more should be heard of this wicked business."

"You are the best judge of these matters," said the slave. "I put myself entirely into your hands. Send me to the villa of the good patrician, where I may hide myself in its shady grottoes, and remain undisturbed until I am able to carry out a cherished wish which I have entertained since my master first fell sick: I need not tell you the nature of it, you will learn of it later on."

A few days after this conversation, Zeta, disguised as a nun, accompanied by a troupe of slave girls similarly dressed, left the Patriarchal Palace, and without adventure of any kind arrived, after a walk of some hours, at the country house where she was to be concealed.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN THE TOMB OF CONSTANTINE COPRONYMUS.

IGNATIUS was not seen after the Council for some time, nor did his friends know whither he had gone ; but there were strange stories regarding him in circulation, which made many persons suspect that he was being subjected to severe treatment and imprisonment.

Melanus, meeting accidentally the senator Behanes, tried to elicit from him precise information on the subject.

"You are a senator, Behanes," he began, "and as such are not ignorant of the intrigues of the Court. You have heard, no doubt, the rumours that are abroad touching Ignatius. You can say if there be solid foundation for them."

"Idle stories floating in the air, put in circulation by busybodies. How should my senatorial rank enable me to gauge their value? A patrician, Melanus, has as easy access to facts as a senator."

"Granted, if he be a patrician who has the ear of Michael, Bardas, or Photius. A senator is oftener in consultation with these men than a mere patrician."

"True. A senator is entrusted with many State secrets, and I do not deny my share in Imperial confidences ; but Court news, as you know, is different from town talk."

"I am inquisitive, Behanes. You must not

refuse me information on a subject with which you cannot but be acquainted. Rumour says that Ignatius has been brought back surreptitiously to the city ; that he is even now confined somewhere in Constantinople ; that he is being treated with great rigour ; that his life is in danger, and will be sacrificed unless he signs an act of abdication. If he has been brought back, it must have been at the suggestion of Photius and by command of Bardas Cæsar. You are in frequent intercourse with these conspirators, and their evil designs cannot be altogether hidden from you."

"You press me too closely, Melanus. Suppose I had heard and was bound to secrecy? But this I will say, that whatever befalls Ignatius his friends must attribute to his unbending character and obstinacy of disposition. Why will he not accommodate himself to circumstances? Why does he not recognise the fact that he has finally lost his position?"

"These are questions that I am not prepared to discuss. Ignatius is a saintly man, and knows his duty ; and he will not swerve to the right or left. You would have him a trimmer."

"I certainly should expect from a man of his experience a certain readiness to compromise, which, indeed, I should regard as a sign of strength and prudence. Where no principle of morality is violated on his part by a change of front, and where resistance is ineffectual, he should bow to the decree of the higher powers."

"The outcome of which is," said Melanus, "that the State should rule the Church, and bishops

should take their orders in official matters from princes. I confess to you I am myself for accommodation to circumstances—or compromise, if you will—in many of the eventualities of daily life. I do not object to the principle of give and take. But in the position of Ignatius we have a case of an altogether exceptional character. He has been driven from his See without cause, and on an unworthy pretence. A layman has been run through the orders, from that of lector to the priesthood, in a scandalous manner; and then has been consecrated bishop by a man who is all but a heretic. Finally, this person has been pushed by secular hands into the Patriarchal throne. Do you not think that you are passing the bounds of the widest liberality when you say that the legitimate Patriarch should step aside to make room for so scandalous an intruder?”

“Be it so, Melanus. You are, perhaps, morally right; and my views are too worldly. And now, before we part,” said Behanes, lowering his voice, “there is much truth in those flying reports to which you have referred. Ignatius has been brought back secretly to the city; and inhuman tortures are in store for him unless he signs a formal act to the effect that he was uncanonically elected, that he has governed his people in a tyrannical manner, and that he renounces his See voluntarily.”

“Which,” said Melanus, “the Patriarch will never do, even if death were the alternative. Farewell.”

The relations of Church and State, the question that agitates the modern civilised world, was not

unknown to the Greeks of the Middle Empire. The intrusion of their rulers into the domain of the Church was direct and immediate. Indeed, the Emperors of the East and West had been, to an embarrassing extent, intermeddlers in ecclesiastical affairs from the time of Constantine the Great. They were animated by the same spirit that influences kings and popular assemblies in our own time, when these latter claim, as a prerogative of their position, the right of veto in the appointments of bishops, the right to exclude religion from the schools, control over the marriage tie, and the censorship of the public preaching of the Church. It is difficult to account for the restlessness and nervousness which the State has so perseveringly exhibited in presence of the ecclesiastical power. If the latter claimed the right of initiating the laws of the Civil Government, or of nullifying them, or of substituting a different code for the guidance of her followers in temporal affairs, then the State might reasonably complain. But one fails to see why the upholding of Christian principles, on which only the Church insists, should create such a flutter in governing bodies. And it cannot in truth be said that disloyalty is, or ever was, put forward by the Church as a doctrine for general adoption. When, in very exceptional circumstances, subjects were absolved from their oath of allegiance to the governing powers and monarchs were theoretically, if not absolutely, deposed by the highest ecclesiastical authority, in times long gone by, an exception, not a rule, was laid down. When nations, trampled

upon and persecuted, were guided into a path of revolt by minor ecclesiastics, they were not taught that rebellion was a principle of Christianity ; but that there might sometimes be very exceptional circumstances in which Christians might, with a good conscience, rebel. The Church has always upheld the principle of St. Paul : " Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God." But the Church will not tolerate the interference of the State in her discipline or teaching. She will be independent in her own domain.

Why may not the two barks glide on side by side towards the great ocean, each on its own track ? Why should the secular vessel alter her course to cross the path of the Roman galley ? It has been so from the beginning ; it will be so, it is to be feared, to the end. The State learns moderation by colliding with immutable and unyielding principles ; and the Church is maintained in humility by the rebuffs she receives from the secular power.

Whatever may be said on this difficult subject, all who read the history of the Greek Empire will be struck by the injudicious manner with which many of the rulers of Constantinople treated the bishops of the Empire, promoting them to gratify a whim, or expelling them to advance some selfish and unworthy design. It was felt, in fact, as slavery by an ecclesiastic of magnanimous spirit to live under them. Their pretensions were intolerable. The most extraordinary demands were made upon the episcopal conscience, and, if their profane

requests were refused, they set all ecclesiastical law and discipline at defiance, and crushed the recusant ecclesiastic with no more hesitation than if he had been a worm, or drove him out as a beast of prey.

These thoughts filled the mind of Melanus as he walked serenely by the amphitheatre, half deafened by the roar of wild beasts fighting within, and ascended the steps of a passage leading up to the level of the street of Theodosia, where Theophylact dwelt. And his musings carried him back to the time when the whole Empire was pagan, and its rulers persecutors of the Church ; and when the bishops of the Capitol were forced to hide in the caverns of the earth and on the mountain side ; and when many died, and all were ready to die, for Christianity ; and when there was no quarter given to the followers of the Redeemer, and none asked it. And he contrasted that dark page of pagan history with his own epoch, and sighed for the days of open persecution ; “for then,” thought he, “there were no scandals, and everyone lived up to the standard of the religion he professed ; and the ruler of the Empire was a panther, crouching for his prey, that might be shunned—not a wolf in sheep’s clothing, like the present Emperor, teaching hypocrisy, propagating perversity, and twisting the minds and consciences of men till they could no longer choose between truth and error, good and evil.”

He found Theophylact alone, and was beginning to communicate to him the information he had received from Behanes, when a man of rough appear-

ance, in a state of great excitement, burst into the chamber, crying :

"Turmarch, hasten ; save him. Off to the Church of the Apostles : they are killing the Patriarch. I was one of them ; but I could not endure the butchery any longer, so I ran hither for help. For two weeks they have been starving, beating, and in every way torturing the holy man, and he is now at the point of death."

"Be calm," said Theophylact. "Take breath, and tell me quietly what you have to say about the Patriarch ; or, better still, answer such questions as I will put to you. Be accurate and truthful. Is Ignatius in Constantinople ?"

"I fear he is not. He must be dead by this time."

"Have you seen him lately ?"

"Yes, within an hour."

"Where have you seen him ?"

"In the Tomb of Constantine Copronymus."

"In a tomb ? And alone ? Buried before his time ?"

"Not alone ; but in the hands of three demons, of whom I have been one."

"Why demons ? Jailers, rather, against their better judgment ?"

"No, veritable monsters : chosen for their well-known cruelty to torture the Patriarch by new methods."

"What tortures did they apply ?"

"O, I cannot tell. They were too numerous."

"Tell them to me in the order in which they occurred. What was the first punishment that you inflicted or witnessed ?"

"To my sorrow, I struck him in the face many times with my clenched fist; and the two other brutes stripped him of his clothes, and left him for a whole night trembling and dying from cold and exposure."

"What then?"

"The next morning we stretched him on the cold marble, face down, with his arms drawn out in the form of a cross, and kept him in that position for many hours."

"What food did you give him all this time?"

"We gave him no food whatsoever for the first week, and only a little the second week, to prevent him from dying between our hands."

"To prevent him from dying? Were you not endeavouring to kill him by slow degrees?"

"No. We were not told to kill him; we were only ordered to torture him in every way until he should consent to sign a paper."

"I understand: a paper containing a renunciation of his See."

"I know nothing of that. I am an ignorant man as well as a bad man. I merely obeyed orders, for money."

"Was there any other torture inflicted on him?"

"Yes, many. You have not yet heard the worst."

"Saints of Heaven!" interposed Melanus, surely you did not put him on the rack, like the pagans, or thrust him into a cauldron of boiling oil, or pour molten lead down his throat?"

"No, no; we did none of those things. We should thus have killed him too soon. Besides, we had not the appliances at hand."

"What, then, did you do?" asked Theophylact, "in addition to what you have mentioned?"

"We kept him without sleep for a whole week, by shaking him, pushing him about, and not allowing him to lie down."

"What more?"

"Finally we raised him between us and seated him high up from the ground, upon the pointed lid of the marble coffin that contains the body of Copronymus; and while in that position we attached huge stones to his feet, so that his body was almost drawn asunder, and so left him sighing and groaning all the night and all this morning. So pitiable a sight was he that I asked for mercy, and was met by taunts and curses: I was a coward, a traitor, an informer, a beast. So, stung by insults and moved by remorse, and seeing that they were about to inflict other torments, I rushed out of the cursed place and came hither to crave the intervention of a humane and powerful Christian soldier."

Meanwhile the sequel was being worked out in the tomb by the savages who were left behind. Seeing that the Patriarch was still unchanged, and that the distension of his body did not break his iron will, they detached the stones from his feet and flung him down violently to the marble floor, so bruising and wounding him that he lay on the ground gasping for breath and weltering in his blood. Then, seeing that his power of farther resistance was gone, one of them, Theodorus by name, seized his hand, and by main force compelled it to sign a cross to the following document: "I, Ignatius, unworthy Patriarch of Constantinople,

confess that I have entered on my office without a decree of election, and that I have governed my people tyrannically."

* * * * *

"Stop," cried a stentorian voice, as with heads bent low two men passed out by a side door from the Church of the Twelve Apostles; "stop, and give an account of yourselves. Are you the butchers who have been killing the Patriarch?"

"We are only poor men," answered one of them, "carrying out the orders of a good and generous master. Behold," said he, pointing up the street, "our employer, a holy Bishop and a bosom friend of the Emperor. He is coming, in accordance with his promise, to take the paper which we have forced Ignatius to sign."

Theophylact (for it was he), turning and looking up the street in the direction to which the man pointed, beheld Photius approaching, clothed in episcopal array and enveloped in an outer robe of ample dimensions, a picture of gravity and dignity. Unable to restrain himself, he marched hurriedly to meet him, and would have addressed him sharply, but Photius anticipated him, saying in the blandest accents:

"Ha, Turmarch! I am rejoiced to meet you. So you are perfectly recovered from your late illness! Looking, I declare, younger and stronger than ever! You will command the armies of the Empire before you have passed half the way through life."

"But," replied Theophylact, somewhat disconcerted by this unexpected manner of address from

a man whom he thoroughly disliked, "to command an army, or part of an army, with honour or satisfaction, one must be animated by a spirit of loyalty to the State and its ruler."

"And who more loyal!" rejoined Photius, "than an officer who has done so much to keep out the Saracen and to recover from him the lost possessions of the Empire."

"You flatter me too much. Candidly, I am in another mood. I have heard with horror of indignities and outrages inflicted on Ignatius within the enclosure of this church, and I have come here to inquire—perhaps even to do more."

"You have received an exaggerated account, no doubt."

"You are charged yourself with being the instigator."

"A mistake, I assure you; a total misrepresentation of the fact."

"Who, then, is responsible for the imprisonment of Ignatius in the Tomb of Constantine Copronymus, and for the brutal treatment he has received there?"

"Not I, I aver most solemnly; and as a proof of my esteem for my predecessor, I promise you that if I can effect his liberation (if he be confined) he shall be safe in his own house before night. Farewell." And he passed along, with his unfathomable heart and its deep designs covered with the mantle of hypocrisy he so rarely put aside.

The sequel of the events narrated in this chapter must be briefly told. Ignatius, after his cruel imprisonment, was released and allowed to

return to his family residence. His enemies had gained their object. Ignatius was proved by his own admission to be unworthy of his position. He had been an uncanonical patriarch from the beginning, and now he was no patriarch at all. He might retire and recruit himself a little ; and when he had regained some strength, he should be summoned to the Church of the Apostles, where he should read his act of renunciation from the pulpit and anathematise himself as an evil-doer.

But neither Photius nor his adherents even suspected the use that Ignatius was making of his leisure hours, while apparently taking rest in his family palace. There he drew up a petition to the Pope, in which he recounted in detail his expulsion from his See, his first imprisonment in the island of Terebintus, the efforts made by his enemies to induce him to sign his abdication, his return to Constantinople, his imprisonment and savage treatment in the Tomb of Copronymus ; and, finally, he besought his Holiness to take his case in hand, as many of his predecessors had done for other banished Patriarchs, and to justify him before the Church and the world.

Ignatius had still a large following amongst the ecclesiastics of his patriarchate : for this document was signed by ten Metropolitans, fifteen bishops, and an immense number of priests and monks. It was carried to Rome by a well-known monk, named Theognostus, who stole out of the city secretly in secular dress, and laid it at the feet of the Pope, telling him in detail all the circumstances connected with the events referred to therein.

Meanwhile, the final act of the drama was being carefully prepared. Ignatius was recovering fast from the effects of his imprisonment and illtreatment, and the time had come when he must pronounce sentence upon himself. And, as it was quite apparent to his persecutors that he would not do so unless force was again applied, a cordon of armed soldiers was drawn around his residence on Pentecost Sunday, the 25th of May, and he was again a prisoner in the hands of his foes.

All is now secure ; Ignatius has been caught in a net, and is securely caged. There is no outlet, and no possibility of escape. To-morrow Ignatius will be led forth a prisoner, and conducted to the Church of the Apostles, where he will ratify before the people the decree he has been forced to sign.

The morning broke gloomily over the capital. There was suffocating stillness in the air, and a barely perceptible tremor in the earth. Orders were given to a party of soldiers to enter the palace and bring forth the prisoner, that he might be marched between guards to the church. But there is an unexpected delay. The soldiers who have entered do not reappear, and the superior officer, who waits for them outside, is anxious and angry. After some time an officer comes out to report that the Patriarch is not to be found.

"What! Have they searched all the chambers?"

"Yes."

"And the garden?"

"Yes."

"And the cellars?"

“ Yes.”

“ Have they been on the roof? ”

“ No ; but they will search there.”

After some further delay, the search party comes forth, and declares that the Patriarch is not in any part of the palace or its precincts.

A miracle, think some of the soldiers. The work of the Devil, say the profane.

An old man in the garments of a slave, carrying on his shoulders a yoke, with panniers suspended from it at each end, was the only person that was known to have passed by a side door from the palace during the night. He was alone ; but he had not gone far when he met another slave, similarly attired, and they walked along gloomily, side by side, without interchanging a word, towards the bank of the Bosphorus below the city on the left side. Here a boatman was sleeping on his oars ; but he was waiting for someone, for at the sound of approaching footsteps he started up, and silently motioned to the two slaves to enter his small craft.

In a moment they were dropping down the stream with the current, and after two hours on the water the rower was seen to direct his craft towards an island of the Prince of Proconesus.

So terrified were these fugitive slaves that they remained but a few hours on this island, and then re-embarked and steered their course to another island of the Propontis. So passing from island to island, they appeared to be flying from some invisible foe, or bent on saving themselves from being betrayed by those whom they encountered on their way.

The cause of their fears became quite apparent the next day, when the Admiral of the fleet appeared in the vicinity with six ships, cruising from island to island, and evidently searching for some one that had escaped from justice or punishment.

The slave who had stolen out of the Palace of Porus was Ignatius, the Patriarch of Constantinople ; and the companion who met him on the way, and now accompanied him on his perilous flight, was his faithful follower, Cyprian.

For a period of nearly three months the venerable fugitive wandered from place to place, keeping to the mountains, or hiding in caverns, hungry, exposed to the heats of the day and the chills of night, living on such slender alms as were given to him in his assumed character of slave ; for no one recognised, under his humble garb, the son of an emperor and the Bishop of the Imperial city.

Conceal himself as he would, he had to run the risk of passing occasionally from island to island, or to the mainland ; and on these expeditions he was sometimes almost confronted with his pursuers. But so perfect was his disguise that they failed to recognise him. And this was most fortunate, for they had orders from the Emperor to kill him, if taken, without ceremony, as a rebel engaged in a dangerous plot against the State. How long this flight and pursuit would have continued it is impossible to say, but for a catastrophe in Constantinople, which gave rise to a universal panic, filling the minds of the people with fury against their sacrilegious rulers, and awakening a

sense of responsibility in the rash and profligate Bardas Cæsar.

A death-like stillness had been in the air for some weeks, and a suffocating heat had brooded over the city. The water in the bay occasionally rose quite suddenly, and as suddenly fell to its usual level. And, though no one could tell why, there was a sense of depression, amounting in some cases to fear, in the minds of all. Women went to the churches to pray against a calamity which they felt was coming; and strong men, meeting in the streets, passed each other with a greeting scarcely above their breath; and the children ceased to prattle or play. Even the dumb creatures seemed not insensible to the sinister influence.

The trees and shrubs lost their fragrance in the sultry air, and the birds sung scarcely at all, or in a changed and smothered note. There was a universal sense of evil impending.

The earthquake came at last, with thunderous rumblings, with quiverings as of a body torn asunder with violent convulsions; with the tottering of walls to their foundations, the sinking-in of roofs, the collapse of whole houses; with death and desolation.

CHAPTER XXII.

ANDRIMADES, IN LOVE, CONSULTS THE MAGICIAN SANTABARIN.

THOUGH Alethea did not observe it, nor even Zeta, to whom it was directed, the parting look of Andrimades, as he turned from the Patriarchal Palace, was that of a smitten man ; and for many days after that last interview with his captive he might be seen " mooning " in the vicinity of the place.

Sometimes he made bold to advance to the door of the mansion ; when he would ask the janitor a number of questions, such as : " Was the slave girl, whom he had brought, in the Palace still ? " " Did she ever go out of doors ? " " Was she lonely ? " " Did she seem to be troubled at the absence of some one ? " He was one day put beside himself, when the porter told him that she had gone away in the middle of the night, no one knew whither, and would never, probably, be seen or heard of again.

If what I have been told be true," said he, " there is an end to Andrimades."

After receiving this information he was not seen for a month in his usual resorts—at the baths ; in the forum, looking out for wine auctions ; at the Palace, listening to and applauding the silly utterances of the Emperor ; or at the great Basilica, inquiring the news of the hour—and when a casual acquaintance asked what had become of Andri-

mades, the invariable answer was: "He has gone into a monastery to become a monk."

Andrimades, however, was not travelling in that direction yet. After the shock he had received on being told of the flight of Zeta, he determined to start in pursuit of her; and as he knew not what direction she had taken, he resolved to search for her in the neighbourhood of the city, and to allow himself no rest until he should find some clue that would lead him to where she was concealed.

He took a boat, and had himself paddled over the Bosphorus to Chalcedon, where he remained for some days, prying into houses and asking passers-by if they had seen a strange slave girl in the neighbourhood, remarkable by her beauty and grace, adding a more special description. They had seen no such person; and, if she was flying from her owner, she would probably hide herself in some larger suburb, where she would be unremarked, and where none would trouble to ask who she was or whence she came.

For a whole week Andrimades patrolled the suburbs, till the little boys and girls began in the end to follow him in troops, jeering and crying out; and he was glad to escape on board a vessel which had its sails set for the most distant islands of the Peloponesus.

Passing out through the Propontis he asked to be put ashore on one of the islands, where he caused much amusement by running from monastery to monastery, inquiring of the monks whether a slave girl were hidden in their caves, or concealed under the habit of their order.

He resumed his broken journey in another vessel that was passing, and voyaged away to Mitylene ; and from that remote place came deviously back to the city, going ashore on every island that they touched on their way, questioning such persons as he met on shore, and bearing himself as a man who was actually demented, or, at least, playing the buffoon.

Returning to Constantinople at nightfall about a fortnight after he had left the city, he stole unobserved into his own house, from which, after a few hours' rest and after regaling himself with a few goblets of Chian, he issued forth at daybreak to renew, with fresh vigour, a search for the slave along the shore of the upper Bosphorus towards the Euxine ; and failing to find her there, he gave up the search, and again returned under the cover of darkness to his home.

"Now," said he, "human means have failed me, and I am driven, against my will, to magic. I will consult Santabarin, the magician, and he, perhaps, may give me some hint by which I may find the abode of my beloved, and may even refresh my eyes by bringing before them that form and face which have taken my senses away."

So he went straight to the house of a celebrated dealer in the black art, who then lived and worked in the Christian city of Constantinople ; and finding him at home, he addressed him as follows :

"Magician, can you bring before me the image of an absent one ?"

"That depends," answered Santabarin, "on various circumstances, particularly that of place.

Where is the person referred to—near or far away? ”

“ I cannot say : far away, I fear.”

“ Then I cannot. The person should be near, to be within the limits of my influence.”

“ But, if I describe the person minutely, can you produce the image? ” urged Andrimades.

“ Accurate descriptions are helpful in our art,” said the magician ; “ but the images they enable us to produce are often shadowy and indistinct.”

“ But I want the image produced one way or other,” said Andrimades. “ I long to cast my eyes on that vision of beauty. You shall be well rewarded,” he added, putting down a massive gold Cretan coin.

“ Describe the lost one,” said Santabarin,” and I will see what I can do for you. Of which sex? ”

“ A woman,” answered Andrimades.

“ Is she old or young? ” asked the magician.

“ Young,” replied Andrimades.

“ Of what stature? ”

“ Tall when I first met her, but less when I last saw her by torchlight.”

“ You must be more precise,” said Santabarin impatiently ; “ I can do nothing on such vague information.”

“ Let me see her tall, then,” said Andrimades.

“ I need not ask if she is beautiful? ”

“ As Aphrodite,” said Andrimades, with a sigh.

“ But beauty is of many types,” said the magician. “ For example, her nose? ”

“ Short. No,” said he, correcting himself, “ a long nose.”

"Her eyes?"

"Blue as the Ægean Sea," said Andrimades.

"The Ægean is green rather."

"Ah, green, perhaps. I know they reminded me of the Ægean."

"Green? Green eyes?" said the magician.

"Indeed, I think they are black," said Andrimades.

"Describe her lips."

"Thick," said Andrimades.

"An Ethiopian?" said Santabarin.

"No such thing," said Andrimades. "She is the colour of a beautiful flower."

"Oh, then," said the other, irritated into mockery, "I suppose she is blue?"

"You trifle with my feelings," said Andrimades. "Surely every flower is not blue."

"Yellow, perhaps?" said Santabarin.

"That's nearer to it."

"The chin?" said Santabarin.

"I did not notice any chin," said Andrimades.

"What!" said Santabarin. "A woman without a chin!"

"I did not mean to convey that. I mean that she has no chin in particular," said Andrimades confusedly.

"A universal chin," said Santabarin.

"That's about it," said the other, "a chin without anything remarkable in it."

"May I ask how often you have seen this girl?" said Santabarin, leading him into a darkened chamber.

"Alas!" said Andrimades, "only twice."

"Is that like her," said the magician, pointing to a dim outline of a female figure that was seen rising out of the ground. Every moment this figure became more defined, until it was presented to Andrimades' peering eyes in a finished and apparently substantial form.

"Like her? Not in any way: a caricature, a mockery of one of the loveliest creatures on the surface of the earth. Like her indeed! You are a charlatan, Santabarin."

"And how could I be other, with such a description to work upon," said the magician. "Blame yourself. You have described this woman as tall and short; have given her two noses, and——"

"Stop," said Andrimades.

"Her eyes are blue, and green, and black; her lips as thick as an Ethiopian's; her colour is that of a flower—which is all the shades of the rainbow. She has no chin."

"I did not say so," interrupted Andrimades. "I said that she had a general chin."

"Which is worse than no chin. And out of such materials you expect me to bring before you what you name, 'A vision of beauty.' Fie, Andrimades."

"Enough. We will turn to another branch of your art. You can, I presume, by your divine or satanic cunning, discover lost things?"

"Sometimes," said Santabarin, modestly.

"And lost persons?"

"More easily," said the magician.

"Then find for me my beloved," said Andrimades, "for she has been lost to me for months. I have sought her long and anxiously: from this city,

through the islands, to Mitylene; and east and south of the city for miles into the country."

"You are an old man," said Santabarin, "of full habit, and of unattractive exterior. What do you call your love? A pet dog or a favourite horse, I suppose."

"My love," said Andrimades, "is neither horse nor dog; but a young slave, whom I fell in love with, not from seeing her, for I can scarcely describe her, but from thinking of her. Old and ugly as I may be, I am deeply in love, Santabarin."

The magician shrugged his shoulders. "You wish," he said, "to find this woman who is hiding from you. You have sought for her to the south and east of the city. Has it occurred to you to try the west?"

"Never. A capital idea. I will search for her to the west of the city. But let me consider: I seldom go in that direction; the only place I am acquainted with to the west is Melanus' villa, where I have been some few times."

"Then search Melanus' villa," said Santabarin, "and you will find her there."

"Melanus' villa. Let me see: Zeta was under the protection of Alethea when she disappeared. Melanus and Alethea are acquainted; I met them conversing under a portico. What more natural place to send the slave to for concealment than the distant and retired villa of her friend? I have the clue. I will follow it up. You are a true magician, Santabarin."

CHAPTER XXIII.

A VILLA NEAR THE IMPERIAL CITY.

A VILLA residence near Constantinople in the middle of the ninth century was, like the villas outside Rome in the days of Augustus, a reproduction on a different scale of the town house of its owner.

If Rome in the third century had its Tivoli and Frascati for the country houses of its nobles, Constantinople, five centuries later, had many fine sites above and below the city and in the neighbourhood, where its senators and patricians planted their trim villas in sylvan nooks, where the devices of art combined with the hand of Nature to render them models of taste and luxury.

The country house of Melanus, to which Zeta was sent for safety, was, in one respect, different from most of those that were seen in the neighbourhood, inasmuch as it was an office for the reception of rent, which was there paid by the cultivator to the owner whose land he occupied. The wide estate of the patrician surrounded his villa on every side, and his farmers in autumn brought their corn to the outside gate of the residence, where it was received by slaves, kept for the purpose, who stored it in granaries until it was ready to be sent to market. But, notwithstanding the unusual bustle arising from the rolling of carts, the bargaining of peasants, and the

chattering of slaves, its surroundings were all quietness and elegance. It stood in a garden teeming with the flowers native to that glorious region, where vast tropical plants waved on high their ample foliage, giving the shade and shelter so much wanted in that climate, and flowers of unusual brilliancy and odour carpeted the soil ; while the fig, the grape, the orange were at hand for anyone that cared to pluck them. Statuary, Christian and pagan, was set up in grottoes and along the ways ; and it was to be remarked that the figures of Greek deities seemed to be posed in mockery of the paganism they represented, so grotesquely did they stand ; while the figures of saints and angels had, without exception, the appearance of having been mutilated and then restored, one having received an arm, another a head, and a third a whole trunk, in lieu of members that they had lost. There was a remarkable facial difference between the old and modern statues as seen in this pleasure ground : the former, as a matter of course, were stamped with the genius and skill of the ancient Greek ; the latter did not show the classic beauty or elegance of features of the old masterpieces, but faces of a distinctively Jewish type.

The great aqueduct of Valens, which had been repaired by the Emperor Constantine in 766, passed not far from the villa ; and a stream was diverted from it to the garden, where it supplied some basins and a small artificial lake, whence streamed a rippling, sparkling, and noisy brook.

It was to this delightful country residence that Zeta was sent by Alethea, that she might lie con-

cealed in its deep and shady arbours, its dim grottoes, and its vine-covered lanes, from the eyes of the vultures of Michael's Court.

She was but a slave. Yet a Christian slave in the ninth century occupied a position much higher than that of her sisters of the pagan world. Such Patriarchs of Constantinople as were remarkable for zeal and learning had spoken in favour of the Christian slave. The eloquent St. John Chrysostom often inveighed against slavery as an abuse among Christians, and preached the doctrine that slaves were brothers and sisters in the Faith, and, before God, in every way equal to their owners. Melanus was not the man to ignore these Christian lessons ; and so his slaves were treated with the greatest consideration, and even more like the children of their master than his bondmen and bondwomen.

He was particularly kind to his visitor, to whom he gave the privilege of going where she wished over the grounds, or occupying herself in the garden, according to her taste. Zeta was no idler. She probably loved flowers, like all girls ; and if she had yielded to her whim, she would have occupied herself entirely with them. But feeling that she owed much to the kindness and liberality of her host, she spent her days in works of utility. She trimmed the vines, removed decaying fruit and leaves from the fig trees, brushed the statues, and cleared the walks. Her hands were full of work of her own creating ; and she seldom relaxed, unless when in the evening she went out among the farmer folk, who respected and esteemed her, or

joined in some indoor work with her fellow-slaves, who were quite in love with the attractive stranger.

So her days flowed by, peaceably and agreeably, until an event occurred which was to her a subject both of amusement and of pain, and which ultimately necessitated her withdrawal from her suburban home. This event was the arrival of a visitor at the villa ; and this visitor was no other than our quaint friend, Andrimades.

Zeta was one day at her usual work in the garden, when the burly form of Andrimades appeared at the gate, and before she had time to deliberate as to whether she should retire into the house or remain, he was at her side, bowing and smirking, and protesting that he was one of the luckiest of men, inasmuch as his good fortune had led him to find, without effort, the very person he had come in search of; at some inconvenience, and in defiance of public opinion, which, no doubt, would be loud in its censure if it discovered that a patrician had left the city to wait upon a slave.

"I have come," he began, and then paused. "I have come," he repeated, and paused again. "I have come," he said a third time, taking courage, "in search of a wife."

"It would have been much better, Lord Andrimades," said Zeta, "if you had not come ; because there is nobody here but farmers, their children, and slaves."

"By the Purple Column," said he, "I have been joking ; I have come to arrest you."

"To arrest me again !" cried Zeta, in dismay.

"Save me, holy Mother of God ! Surely you could not be so cruel, my Lord ?"

"To arrest you, beautiful Helen, I have come ; and I have been searching for you a long time up in the mountains and down in the valleys, out among the islands, in convent and private house, on sea and land, everywhere in a word. I have fallen among robbers, and fallen over two precipices ; three times have I been nearly drowned in my travels. My good Genius has brought me here to find you at last."

"And who arrests me now ?" demanded Zeta. "In whose name do you come ?"

"I arrest you in my own name, on my own account," said Andrimades. "I arrest you, not to put you in prison, not for the amusement of the sot Michael, but to make you my wife."

Zeta looked at him with wonder depicted on her face. He was so ugly, so bloated, so simpering, and so silly, that she could scarcely suppress a smile ; and happening to glance sideways, she saw a distorted figure of Momus grinning so hideously at her lover from the other side of the pathway that, quite overcome, she broke out into an immoderate fit of laughter.

"I am at a loss to account for this mirth," said Andrimades.

"But look at him, how he grins," said Zeta, pointing to the statue, in haste to repair her fault.

"Let him grin," said Andrimades. "I don't grin, but smile," he added, putting on a smirking, amorous expression of so utterly grotesque a character, that Zeta, looking at him, broke out again into an in-

describably light and ringing peal of merriment. "I really cannot restrain myself," she said; "you must forgive me."

"Forgive my love, who smiles at me.
Forgive her ever and a day,"

quoted Andrimades. "I would forgive you even if you laughed at myself."

This was too much for the little slave. She turned and ran at the top of her speed towards the garden gate, passing around a fountain, through a covered alley, and then along a pathway that ran by the side of the lake.

Andrimades stood awhile bewildered at this sudden flight; but as he saw the floating drapery of her garments disappear into the covered alley he started in pursuit. Unfortunately, he was but ill acquainted with the ground, and in his haste came into collision with a pillar, as he rounded the first corner. He recovered himself quickly, and renewed the chase. He presently saw Zeta's figure bearing away rapidly towards his right, and changed his direction with a view to cutting her off. But his misfortunes were not ended. He had forgotten the existence of a small lake towards which the lawn on to which he had directed his course swiftly declined; and when, after a few minutes' run, he discovered that what he had supposed to be a continuation of the lawn was in reality a floor of water-lilies and duckweed, he had already acquired a considerable impetus. Zeta turned on hearing the splash, and saw Andrimades struggling up the bank, covered with mud and sedge grass. She

went to his assistance, spoke kindly to him, expressed her sorrow for the accident, and helped him to mount the bank. He was dripping and crestfallen. All his gallantry was gone.

“Can I get you a cloak?”

“To cover me all over,” said he sorrowfully: “and a vessel of water to wash off the mud. I could not present myself in the city in this soiled state, or I should never again be received in the Palace.”

“I will put you into the hands of the domestic slaves,” said Zeta. And she disappeared before he could reply.

Having made a hurried toilet from Melanus' wardrobe, Andrimades mounted his chariot and turned his horses' heads towards the city. He drove along slowly, pondering on the interview he had enjoyed; but he felt both humbled and ashamed at the ridiculous termination of it, and made up his mind firmly that, in his future interviews with Zeta, he would be more of the patrician and less of the buffoon. “For,” he said to himself for the first time in his life, “if I am to make any way in the affections of this dear girl it must be by my manners; for my appearance, I am reluctantly forced to admit, is not attractive.”

Engaged in these and similar reflections he arrived at the gates of Constantinople, and, dismissing his chariot, was preparing to enter on a smart walk to gain his home, when he encountered Photius, who came up by a side street.

After a mutual salutation, the latter said to him:

“You are growing downwards, I declare. You

must have been a much taller man when the robe you wear was made for you."

"I bear the cloak of another. The elements were unfavourable to me ; I was dripping ; a good Samaritan covered me."

"Dripping?" said Photius. "Surely not dripping in such bright weather."

"Dripping," repeated Andrimades ; "but why or how I must leave you to guess."

"But I will not guess, because I have no idea on the subject. I am glad to have met you, and not sorry that our meeting takes place after an accident, which possibly may have startled you. I wish to speak to you seriously. Your conduct is too light and airy and unsuitable to a man of your years : I speak to you as spiritual head of this city."

"You should have said *half-head* of this city. While Ignatius lives you are no more."

"Are you, then, a follower of Ignatius? I took it as certain that you went with the Court."

"I go with Cæsar ; but I am balanced on the Patriarch. I will go with you if you turn the scale."

"The scale is already turned, friend Andrimades ; and therefore do I address you as your spiritual ruler."

"On with you," said Andrimades ; "but if your instructions do not suit my needs, I shall take a leaf out of the book of your rival."

"I tell you, then," said Photius solemnly, "that the gravity of age is not upon you."

"I am glad to hear you say so."

"Your ways are those of a young man."

"So they are."

"But of a frivolous, abstracted, dissatisfied young man, whose mind is devoured by some secret passion : in a word, of a young man in love."

"And what if I am in love?" said Andrimades.
"Where is the harm in it?"

"O, in love!" said Photius testily. "You are in love, I presume, with the excitement of the chase and the pleasures of the table. There can be no other love for such as you."

"But there is," said Andrimades, heaving a sigh.
"I am in love, and am loved."

"Then I bid you good day," said Photius ;
"because your mind is unhinged : you are not capable of renovation."

"Stop. Do not go, Patriarch : I have something of concern to tell you. You have lectured me ; I am about, in turn, to give you a hint for your good."

"You are impertinent, Andrimades."

"I don't mean to be so. It is not for your soul's good, but for the good of your body."

"Speak it, though you distress me."

"Do you know Theognostus, the monk?"

"A queer digression ! I do."

"Where is he, think you, at present?"

"How should I know?"

"Is he a man that you have trust in?"

"Not much, I confess."

"Neither ought you. Is this enough?"

"You excite my curiosity."

"Have you ever seen a monk dressed as a travelling smith?"

"Never."

"I have : I have seen Theognostus stealing out through the Golden Gate after nightfall, with the tools of a smith on his shoulder, going towards the west on business."

"With what object? On what mission?"

"You don't understand me?"

"No."

"Going to the west on business; that is, going to Rome, to tell of your doings."

"You amaze me."

"I thought I should."

"But you are so strange and whimsical. Perhaps you are jesting?"

"Theognostus," said Andrimades, "left this city disguised as a secular, immediately after you had punished Ignatius in the Tomb of Constantine Copronymus. He was bearer of an important document, which he was commissioned to put into the hands of the Bishop of Rome. It contained an epitome of recent events; it dwelt upon the banishment of Ignatius, and the cruel tortures inflicted upon him; it besought the Pope to take his cause in hand, after the example of his predecessors in similar cases. And this document was signed by ten Metropolitans, fifteen bishops, and an infinity of priests and monks."

Photius, who was becoming restless during these remarks, actually lost colour at the end of them, and with a simple, "Farewell, I must go; business of importance awaits me," left Andrimades abruptly, and turning to the right walked rapidly in the direction of the Patriarchal Palace, and was in a few minutes out of sight.

Andrimades did not move for some time, but stood looking abstractedly at the receding figure ; and muttered something to himself, which, from the expression of his face, was clearly not complimentary. Then turning to go his way, he said, audibly :

“ I have given him a shock. How he winced under it ! I have other surprises in store for him. He might allow me to pursue my little foibles, which are harmless and injure no one. I have never hurt anyone, as he has ; nor have I stolen another's place and money. I have never stolen anything—which reminds me that I must see that this cloak is returned to Melanus.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PLOTS AND COUNTERPLOTS.

IN due time, Leo, ambassador of Michael III. to Pope Nicholas, arrived in Constantinople, and told his story of the indignation of the Pope at the betrayal of his legates, and his repudiation of their acts in a full gathering of the Roman clergy. He repeated, word for word, to the wondering and indignant ears of Photius, the Cæsar, and the Emperor, the sentences in which Nicholas had declared that he would not sanction the removal of Ignatius nor the substitution of anyone in his place.

Andrimades had unconsciously fanned the flame of fury that was consuming the Court party when he told Photius so indirectly, but at the same time so circumstantially, of the departure of Theognostus from the Eastern capital with a document for the Pope, in which a genuine narrative of all that had occurred was set forth, and attested by bishops of all ranks and a large number of monks and priests.

Consultations between Photius, Bardas, and Michael were after this time of daily occurrence. The Emperor recommended that strong measures should be taken against the Pope without delay ; that, as Nicholas had not yielded to intrigue or bribery, he should be made to yield to force ; and he suggested, therefore, an invasion of the Roman

States. Bardas and Photius were of opinion that the time for such measures had not come, and they recommended, instead, a recourse to argument, in which the Pope's right to condemn the action of a sister Church should be called in question.

"For," Photius said, "as our Church has in the past raised herself against the pretensions of Rome, at least on one notorious occasion, why should it not do so again? The Pope of the present day has insulted, in my person, the Patriarch of Constantinople. Why may not I in this year assert my pre-eminence and independence, as did my predecessor, John the Faster, four centuries ago, when rebuked by Pope Gregory? Has your reading," demanded Photius, addressing himself to Bardas, "led you to a knowledge of the celebrated controversy between these remarkable men?"

"No," said Bardas, "I did not even dare to hope that the superiority of Rome was ever called in question here."

"O yes," said Photius, "not only called in question, but a rival claim to equality of rank in the Church was set up. I will tell you how it happened. John was Patriarch of Constantinople in the year 450. He was a pious and austere man, and he was commonly called 'The Faster,' on account of his total abstinence from the use of flesh meat. He fell under the censure of Pope Gregory, because he caused a monk to be publicly scourged in the Church of the Holy Apostles, and also because he punished a priest with a severity which the Pope regarded as inhuman. Gregory wrote a letter, couched, it must be admitted, in

paternal language, to John, asking him for an explanation of his conduct in these two cases. To this letter the Patriarch replied curtly, saying that he knew nothing of the events referred to in Pope Gregory's letter ; and when Gregory, in reply, put him in a dilemma by writing that he either stated an untruth or confessed to ignorance of what he should know, as a pastor of souls, John at once assumed a position of independence, styled himself the 'Universal Bishop' and 'Œcumenical Patriarch,' and gave Gregory to understand that, as such, he was above control, and admitted no superior."

"Did the successors of John adhere to this title?" inquired Bardas critically.

"Cyriacus, the immediate successor of John, did; for we find it assumed in a synodal letter which he sent to the Pope immediately after his appointment to the See."

"And with Cyriacus it dropped out of use?"

"Yes," replied Photius. "We have no record of its use by subsequent Patriarchs."

"Then what can you make of it," asked Bardas, "beyond the rebellion of an individual against a superior?"

"True," said Photius, "in one sense; but there is another view that may be taken of the action of John the Faster which makes it valuable as a precedent."

"Pray what view?"

"The twenty-eighth Canon of the Council of Chalcedon gave to the 'New Rome,' that is Constantinople, a prerogative equal to that which the

‘Old Rome’ is admitted to have enjoyed.* The ‘Faster’ would appear to have been applying this Canon, and bringing into action the privilege it gave his Church, when he declined to receive the correction of Gregory the Great.”

“According to this view,” said Bardas, “the action of the Patriarch John is of much value to us just now, even though it was only an isolated case. Could you not, as an historian, draw up a general indictment against the Pope, and dispute, on rational and historical grounds, the right of the Bishop of Rome to control the election of our Bishops, or to visit us with ecclesiastical penalties? We are about to rebel against the Pope, and if we are driven to it, to cast him off altogether. For this we shall be censured by many: clerics and laymen will equally blame us; the educated members of our own community will taunt us with schism, and the ignorant with irreligion. We must be in a position to defend ourselves, and we must be able to refute the objections of all our opponents. This we can do only if we be fortified with arguments drawn up by a man of ability and research.”

“I will do what you require,” said Photius; “it will be for me a labour of love. I cannot promise you that I shall have my indictment against Rome ready in a day, or even in a week; it will necessitate much thought and reading; but when I have drawn it up to my satisfaction, I will call upon you and read it for you. Meanwhile, trust me, I will omit

* This Canon is spurious, having been drawn up by a mere section of the Bishops after the formal dissolution of the Council.

nothing which may appeal to popular feelings, to bring down Nicholas from the high position he holds in the minds of the Catholics of the Eastern Empire."

About this time, and while the plot against the supremacy of Rome was on the point of arriving at a very acute stage, some letters were received in the East which tended to widen the breach that already existed between the two Churches. One of these was the reply of Pope Nicholas to the letter which Photius had sent to Rome by Leo; another was the Pope's reply to the letter of Michael, conveyed by the same ambassador; and a third was a Papal circular addressed to the faithful of the East through the Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria.

In his letter to the intruded Patriarch, the Pope made use of very strong and pointed language in characterising his conduct since his usurpation of that title.

"You say," Nicholas wrote, "that you have been forced to take possession of the Patriarchal chair; but how comes it that you have not acted as a father since you have been placed there? You have been severe, even to the extent of cruelty, deposing archbishops and bishops, condemning as well as deposing Ignatius too: but until I see very clearly that he is guilty, I will not look upon him as deposed, nor upon you as Patriarch of Constantinople. As to the different customs which, you say, exist in different Churches, I do not oppose them, provided that they are not against the Canons; but I cannot allow a privilege

to be established in your Church of taking men who are only laymen, and raising them to the rank of the Episcopate."

In his letter to the Emperor, the Pope was equally vigorous.

"I have," he wrote, "in my hands your letters addressed to my predecessor Leo and to myself, in which you testify to the virtues of Ignatius and to the regularity of his ordination. But now you say that he has been driven from his See in consequence of charges that have been made against him; and you allege, as the cause of his deposition, his having usurped the See by the aid of the secular power."

In the third letter, the faithful of the East are warned against the machinations of Photius and his Imperial allies.

"Take warning," the Pope writes, "that I have not in any way consented to or taken part in the elevation of Photius or the deposition of Ignatius." And addressing himself in particular to the Patriarchs of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria, he adds: "I entreat, and by Apostolic authority I order you, to be of the same view as I am with respect to Photius and Ignatius, and to publish this letter in your respective dioceses, that it may come to the knowledge of every one."

Photius, in his study preparing his case against the Pope, read these letters with much chagrin. But, instead of stimulating him to his self-imposed task, they almost had the effect of inducing him to abandon it altogether. For they seemed to him to take the disputed succession out of the category

of local questions, and to put it as a point for consideration before each and every of the Christian churches of the East. It occurred to him that other means should be devised for removing the impression that these letters were calculated to make, besides a learned treatise on ecclesiastical law and jurisdiction.

"They will believe the Pope," thought he ; "they will listen with attention to his words ; they will reverence his decision ; they will adopt his views. What else can they do, and especially the unlearned among them, when they hear his circular read in all the pulpits of Eastern Europe and Asia?" And then it occurred to him, as a man of craft and resource, that, difficult as unquestionably such a task must be, he would endeavour to prove to the world that these letters were forged, and did not represent the views or decisions of the reigning Bishop of Rome.

With a view to carrying out this delicate and daring enterprise, he looked about him for an accomplice on whom he could rely ; and he found one in the person of a hypocritical monk named Eustratus, a man of unknown antecedents and a perfect stranger in Constantinople. He summoned him to the Patriarchal Palace, held many interviews with him, and gave him his part to play in a farce that was to entertain and confuse, and, finally, to deceive the Christians of the city and of the most distant provinces of the Empire.

Eustratus, in the performance of his *rôle*, came into the Palace of the Patriarch one day, when the

reception hall was filled with callers, and Photius was there talking and transacting business with the crowd, and addressing himself to the latter, said in an excited manner :

“ I have just returned from Rome ; and I have news for you of a very grave character.”

“ I, by anticipation, understand your Roman news,” said Photius. “ Another censure, I predict ; another condemnation of my conduct.”

“ Not so, Patriarch,” said Eustratus, “ but tidings that will please instead of disconcerting you. The Roman hurricane has changed to a gentle zephyr.”

“ You amaze me, or you are jesting. Be on your guard ; do not trifle with me.”

“ Would a poor and lowly monk dare to make so little of a mighty ecclesiastical prince as to jest at his expense ? You do me an injustice, Patriarch. I am here to tell of your triumph in the capital of the West, which is now as loyal to you as your own great city.”

“ Happy news, if true,” said Photius ; “ for I too am loyal to Rome, as my ecclesiastical head. What pleasure it would give me ! What rapture to get rid of Ignatius with the approval of Rome ! But the expectation is too blissful to be true. I deceive myself : the Pope cannot have stultified himself. Perhaps it is the Roman populace that has taken my case in hand, and is putting pressure on the Pope in my interest ? ”

“ No, it is not the Roman people alone that are for you, and against your rival. Nicholas, their head, and chief of the East and West, is now entirely on your side.”

"Your good fortune is assured as a bearer of such news. But quick, quick, your authority? I burn with impatience. Hear this man, all ye clients of mine, and judge if he fills up with happy images the outlines he has traced."

"It was my misfortune," said Eustratus, whining hypocritically, "to be sent to Rome by a devoted friend of Ignatius, and—shame upon me—I carried with me a letter, in which an account was given of the sufferings, punishments, and persecutions of that misguided man. I expected that the Pope would have thanked me, would have praised me, would have made me, perhaps, a priest of his own Church, or, it might be, found a snug little See for me in some part of the world. But, what was my horror to see the countenance of the Pontiff change, and assume a dark expression, even like that of Nebuchadonazor, when he turned on the Hebrew boys who had refused to adore the statue of gold."

"Go from my presence," said Nicholas, in a loud voice, "bearer of false representations. How dare you import to this capital scandalous imputations on the conduct of the Emperor of the East, and the worthy man whom he has chosen to fill the place of the justly deposed Patriarch, Ignatius. Away with you! You shall leave the city of Rome to-morrow, and shall carry with you my views and decision in respect to this controversy. I shall have a letter prepared to-morrow, which I charge you in the most solemn manner to deliver into the hands of him whom I will designate my friend and brother, the reigning Patriarch of Con-

stantinople. In it I will make clear the misunderstanding I have laboured under with regard to him and his acts, and I will lay the foundation of a solid friendship with him, which time shall increase and cement into a union never to be dissolved."

"I give you the letter of Pope Nicholas," Eustratus added. "I crave your pardon for my indiscreet intrusion into this dispute, and my unfortunate advocacy of a deposed pretender; and, with your leave, I retire into my monastery to busy myself with the affairs of my own soul, and never again to take part in the polemics of Church or State."

After these remarks Eustratus rose to depart; but was detained by Photius, who told him that he should accompany him to the Imperial Palace, where the letter which he had just delivered should be read for the Emperor and Bardas, when he might give a verbal account of his mission, his reception in Rome, and the change which had taken place in the Pope's views.

The first and immediate effect of the reading of this letter was to stimulate the wrath of the Cæsar and the Emperor against Ignatius, for it adroitly represented him as decrying and complaining of them to the Pope. They gave orders that his guards should be doubled, and that he should be watched day and night; and then they were seized with an almost unaccountable curiosity to discover the most minute particulars of the mission of Eustratus to Rome; of its origin, of the manner in which it was entrusted to him, and of the agent through whom it was communicated.

Eustratus was not prepared for this interrogatory. When asked to say who gave him the letter of Ignatius, he was silent. When pressed to answer, he refused, as if he was keeping a secret that he could not honourably divulge. But, when he was threatened for his reticence, he admitted reluctantly that he received the paper from Cyprian, a faithful companion of the deposed Patriarch.

The Imperial inquisitors, rendered suspicious of the truth of Eustratus' words by his hesitancy and embarrassed manner, commanded him to give them a description of the outward appearance of Cyprian. He was unable to do so. They asked him to describe any of the followers of Ignatius whom he met on the occasion of his visit to the Patriarch. He stammered, became confused, and was silent. He was asked if he could make any statement on the subject, when he completely broke down, and confessed that the whole story was a fabrication.

Then the wrath of the Cæsar and the Emperor appeared to boil over. They ordered their attendants to seize upon Eustratus and bind him; and, deaf to the entreaty of Photius, who pleaded hard for his liberation, they had him soundly thrashed with a strong, elastic cane, until blood flowed freely and he howled with pain. Then he was driven contumeliously out of the Palace, and ordered, as he valued his head, to leave the city at once, and never again to present himself in the European provinces of the Empire.

CHAPTER XXV.

EAST AND WEST.

AFTER this incident, almost incredible but yet historical, Photius again turned to his books, and gave his whole time to the preparation of his indictment against the Roman Church. He shut himself in his library, denied himself to visitors, and made up for lost time by reading and writing continuously. And when, at the end of a fortnight, he had completed his case against the Pope, he called to read his manuscript to Bardas.

"I have put a few points together," said he, addressing his patron ; "and I should wish to have your opinion of their force and relevancy before giving them circulation. I have made it a source of complaint that the Roman Church fasts on Saturday ; that it has done away with the fast of the first week of Lent ; that it will not allow men who are married to be ordained ; and that it will have those who have received the unction of the holy chrism from priests re-anointed by a bishop, on the principle that the priestly unction is invalid."

"Do you ask for my free and unprejudiced judgment on these complaints ? "

"Oh ! learned Cæsar."

"Then I will give it candidly. It appears to me of little importance when or how people fast, or whether they fast at all ; as for your priests, I think they would be better without wives ; and the

chrisism question may be quite as well decided on the Roman principle as on yours. In other words, to express my views briefly, I think that your charges, so far, against the Pope are trivial and narrow, and will not draw a single adherent from him. Can you not charge him with mutilating the Sacraments or the public worship of the Church, or of introducing unauthorised devotions contrary to primitive practice, or of falling into error on some point of faith?"

"His Sacraments are the same substantially as ours; his Liturgy is the same as ours, except in some minor ceremonies; he prays for the dead, as we do, and to the Saints, and is one with us in the use of holy images. I can make no charge against the Pope on the essential practices of the Catholic religion, but I can and I do charge him with adding to the Creed."

"You refer, I presume, to that well-worn controversy about the procession of the Holy Ghost."

"The same," said Photius.

"But even that makes little impression; for, as I understand it, the Western Church says that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, while the Eastern Church does not deny that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father through the Son."

"But there is a difference," said Photius.

"A verbal one, I admit; but nothing more. I confess to you that I am disappointed on hearing your vaunted and long expected indictment against our Roman adversary. I expected you would have taken higher ground."

"How could I, pray? I must be a faithful reporter of events."

"Could you not have argued thus: 'Rome was in early times the capital of the Empire, and in consequence its bishops were first in rank and power. Constantinople is now the capital, therefore its Bishop should take precedence of the Bishop of Rome.'"

"This argument I would not use; for though it might have weight with the populace, the learned could not swallow or digest it."

"And why not?"

"Because the Roman Pontiffs were at the head of the Bishops of the Church long before they derived rank from the pre-eminence of the city of Rome. When they lived during three hundred years in the Catacombs near Rome, or lay hid in the cellars of the city, or wandered on the mountains of the neighbourhood, they were acknowledged to be the Primates and Governors of the Christian body throughout the world."

"I thought that this argument had some solidity, if perchance not much force."

"It has neither force nor solidity," said Photius, decidedly.

"Did you not tell me, weeks ago, that this argument was used by the Council of Chalcedon as the foundation of one of its decrees?"

"Yes; but did I say that I believed in its efficacy?"

"Perhaps not: you said, at least, that John the Faster believed in it, and acted upon it."

"But I am not John the Faster, nor am I answerable for his whims."

"You tire me with your fine distinctions, which are calculated only to mislead."

"I return the compliment. I believe that when we argue Greek meets Greek."

"Pshaw! Give me an answer to one more question, and I will put a seal on my mouth. Is not the following a sound argument? The Bishop of Rome is Patriarch of the West; the Bishop of Constantinople is Patriarch of a large section of the East; now a patriarch is independent of control within his patriarchate. Therefore ——"

"Not so fast. The argument should be, not as you put it, but in this form. The Bishop of Rome is Patriarch of the West and Primate of the whole Church; the Bishop of Constantinople is Patriarch of a large section of the East; now a patriarch is independent of control by another patriarch within his patriarchate. Need I draw the conclusion?"

"No; I suppose it would be: Our Patriarch cannot be ruled by the Pope as patriarch, but he can be by the Pope as Primate."

"Precisely."

"Then I bid you good day, Photius. My suggestions, I need not say, were well meant. Use your own discretion; give your charges against Rome publicity; send them circulating about on every side. Others may see them in a light that I do not. They have my best wishes on their way. If they be successful in detaching many from allegiance to Rome, and giving an appearance of legality to our proceedings, they will have attained an end that is equally dear to us both."

Meanwhile, Pope Nicholas was being enlight-

ened. Theognostus, the envoy of Ignatius, had arrived in Rome and presented his document. Many persons of rank and influence had fled from the scandals and irreligious confusion of the Eastern capital, and going to Rome, had told the Pope of the gross and wholly undeserved pains and privations to which Ignatius had been subjected. He had before him, from these reliable and unprejudiced sources, a full account of the persecution which his legates had undergone ; of their fall and betrayal of their trust ; of the Council that had been held, of the Bishops who attended it, of their cabals and prejudices, of the cruel and one-sided decision they had come to, and its issue in the public degradation of the deposed Patriarch.

Not a link was wanted to complete a chain of evidence against Photius, which had its origin in a suspicion founded on his own first letter, and which had been growing in the Papal mind as the correspondence continued.

The Pope was not ignorant of the character of Michael, nor of the depravity of his uncle, the *de facto* ruler of the Eastern Empire. He knew, too, the virtues of Ignatius, and his blameless career as a bishop.

With this light in his mind, he called his advisers about him, and was strengthened by their opinion in his views of the whole controversy. Then he summoned a large number of provincial bishops, and they sat deliberating, first in the Church of St. Peter and afterwards in the Church of St. John Lateran, to which they were forced to retire by the extreme cold of the weather. He put

before them the Acts of the Council of Constantinople and the letter of the Emperor Michael, which he had translated from Greek into Latin ; and then he summoned before them the Bishop Zachary as a witness to all he had heard and seen in the East.

It was not without careful scrutiny and full information, unbiassed, impartial, and with a desire to do justice between the contending parties, that Nicholas, Pope of Rome, in council with his bishops, gave his final decision in the Photian controversy, and issued a decree against the usurper, which for magnitude of importance and severity of language had not been surpassed by any document emanating from the Holy See up to that date.

“Photius,” said Nicholas I., “who has taken the part of a schismatic, and has left the secular state to be ordained bishop by Gregory of Syracuse, a man long since condemned—Photius, who has usurped the See of our brother Ignatius, Patriarch of Constantinople, and entered, as a thief, into the sheepfold ; who since then has been in communion with those who have been condemned by our predecessor, Pope Benedict ; who, in violation of his promise, has assembled a Council, in which he has presumed to depose and anathematise Ignatius ; who, against the law of nations, has corrupted the legates of the Holy See, and made them slight and disobey our orders ; who has removed the bishops who would not hold communion with him, and put others in their places ; who persecutes the Church to this hour, and ceases not to inflict horrible tortures on our brother Ig-

natus ; Photius, guilty of such crimes, is deprived of all priestly honour, and of all clerical rights by the authority of Almighty God, of the Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul, and of all the saints, of the six General Councils, and by the judgment of the Holy Ghost, pronounced by us in such way that, if after coming to the knowledge of this sentence, he continues to retain the See of Constantinople, or to hinder Ignatius in the peaceable government of his Church, or to perform any sacerdotal function, he shall be deprived of all hope of entering again into our communion, and remain anathematised, without receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, except at the hour of death.

“Gregory of Syracuse, a schismatic, who, after having been deposed by a Council and suspended by Pope Benedict, has dared to consecrate Photius, and perform many other sacred functions, is deprived of all priestly authority, without hope of its being given back to him. And if in the future he exercises his orders, or gives trouble to Ignatius, he shall be anathematised, as well as all those who hold communion with him.

“We forbid all clerical functions to those whom Photius has ordained.

“As for our brother Ignatius, who has been driven from his See violently by the Emperor, and despoiled of priestly authority through the prevarication of our legates, we declare, in the name of Jesus Christ, that he has never been deposed or anathematised ; those who have attempted to do so not having had the power. For this reason we reinstate him in his dignity and office ; and if

anyone for the time to come shall give him hindrance or trouble without the consent of the Holy See, he shall be deposed, if a cleric, and anathematised, if a layman, no matter what his rank may be. We make it an ordinance that the bishops and other clergy who have been sent into exile or deposed since the unjust removal of Ignatius shall be re-established in their sees and their functions, under pain of anathema to all opponents. If they be accused of any crime, they shall be brought to judgment, after being re-established—but by the Holy See only,”

This sentence, so severe, so overwhelming, fell like a thunderbolt upon Photius and the Emperor Michael. The latter could not suppress his indignation ; his pride was hurt, his project was set aside ; he was lashed into ungovernable fury at finding himself severely rebuked in the Pope's decree, and threatened with excommunication if he persevered in the course upon which he had entered. He sent, without giving himself time to weigh the consequences of his act, one of his principal officials, named Michael, to Rome, bearing a letter for Pope Nicholas teeming with personal insults and terms of contempt for the Papal office and dignity, in which he inveighed against the language (Latin) in which the sentence against Photius was pronounced as barbarous, threatened to send his troops into Italy to rase the city of Rome, called upon the Pope in imperious language to revoke the condemnation of Photius and withdraw the anathema he had hurled against him, allowing him to remain in peaceable possession

of the Patriarchate, and once and for ever setting aside the claim of Ignatius to be restored to the position from which he had been removed.

The reply of Pope Nicholas to this angry letter was comparatively mild, but strongly argumentative. He took up Michael's statements point after point, and submitted them all to scrutiny. Instead of beginning with denunciation, as the Emperor had begun, his first sentence was a prayer, in which he besought the Almighty that He might teach him what to say, and might dispose the Emperor to listen to his words with docility.

"In the successors of St. Peter," said Nicholas, "you should not look to what they are, but to what they do for the correction of the Churches and for your salvation; for surely you will not pretend that they are lower than the Scribes and Pharisees, to whom the Lord enjoined obedience because they sat in the chair of Moses. You say that since the Sixth Council none of our predecessors has been honoured as you have honoured us by writing to us. It is to the shame of your predecessors to have been so many years without seeking a remedy for the many heresies that have surrounded them, and to have refused to receive it when offered by us. It is a fact that during the time you name there have been but few Catholic Emperors, and the heretical ones knew that we could hold no communion with them. When they attempted to enter into it we repelled them, to their confusion, which the Church of Constantinople has not done. When the Emperors were

Catholic they sought our aid, as is made clear by the Councils held under Constantine and others, and by many letters addressed to Leo and Benedict, our predecessors."

The Pope makes it matter for complaint that the Emperor uses words of command in his letter instead of the prayers and entreaties of his predecessors ; and he adds :

"You regard the Latin tongue as barbarous ; perhaps you do not understand it. But do you not see that there is something incongruous in naming you Emperor of the Romans if you are unacquainted with their language. Banish it, if you wish, from your Palace and your churches ; though they say that in Constantinople the Epistle and Gospel of the Liturgy are read in Latin before being recited in Greek.

"You say that when you wrote to ask our aid, it was not for the purpose of having Ignatius judged again. The event proves the contrary, since you have had him judged a second time. If he was already judged, why have you judged him, against the prohibition of Scripture. But it is easy to see that, knowing the defects of the first judgment, you tried to repair them by the presence and authority of our legates."

He then dwells on the nullity of the last sentence pronounced on Ignatius, the judges being under suspicion, or even declared enemies ; some of them being excommunicated and deposed, and others inferior in rank. He proves that such persons should not even accuse a bishop by the sixth Canon of the Second General Council, held at

Constantinople in the year 382. He maintains that it will be difficult to find any Bishop of Constantinople deposed without the consent of the Pope, and he gives many examples to prove his contention.

“Where have you read,” he asks, “that Emperors who preceded you assisted at Councils, except when Faith was under discussion, which is the common property of clerics and laymen? You were not satisfied with your personal presence at a gathering summoned to pronounce judgment upon a bishop, but you carried three thousand secular persons with you to be witnesses to his degradation. You drew his accuser from your household ; you appointed judges who were under suspicion and mercenary. You subjected a superior to his inferiors, contrary to the decree of the Council of Chalcedon. It makes one laugh to hear from you that your Council was equal in numbers to that of Nicæa. You should name it the Seventh or Eighth General Council. But the number is of no account if devoid of piety and justice. This is what we wrote in answer to the first part of your letter : but we were not able to reply to the remainder of it, for God afflicted us with a malady which prevented us, and your messenger was so impatient that he left Rome abruptly, as he feared the approach of winter ; and it was with difficulty that we prevailed upon him to stop at Ostia until our letter was finished.”

The Pope continues :

“If you rise up in opposition to what we have said we shall regard you as we should a heathen

and a publican. Our privileges were granted through the mouth of Jesus Christ Himself. Councils have not given them: they have only honoured and guarded them. They are perpetual; they may be attacked, but cannot be abolished. They have been in existence before your reign, and will continue independent of you as long as the name of Christian lasts. Saints Peter and Paul were not brought here after death, by the action of princes, as to your city; but they preached the Gospel in Rome, and sealed it there with their blood. They took over the Church of Alexandria through their disciple, St. Mark, in the same way as St. Peter in person acquired the Church of Antioch. It was through these principal Churches that Saints Peter and Paul governed all the others.

“You have asked me in you letter to send you Theognostus, whom our brother Ignatius made ruler of the monasteries of several provinces; you also ask for other monks, who you say have displeased you. I know well that you want them for the purpose of illtreating them, though you have never seen them, and know nothing of their mode of acting. Some of them have served God in Rome from their childhood, and Theognostus has never said anything but what is good of you. He has found rest here like many others; for so many thousands are coming here day by day to put themselves under the protection of St. Peter, and end their lives in this place, that one sees in Rome all nations gathered together, a miniature of the Universal Church. Do you think it right that we

should give up anyone to princes whose favours they have disregarded, or whose wrath they have provoked? The pagans would not do such a thing. Besides, we have a right to call to ourselves monks and the clerics of any diocese for the general good of the Church. But if you think that Theognostus has spoken badly of Photius and in favour of Ignatius, be assured that he has said nothing of one or the other that everyone does not say, and which we have not heard from a large number of persons who have come to Rome from Alexandria, Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Mount Olympus, or which we have not learned from your messengers and your own letters.

“You seem to wish to frighten us by threatening to destroy our city and our country; but we have confidence in the protection of God, and as long as we live we shall not fail to do our duty. What evil have we done you? We have not ravaged Sicily, nor taken by conquest a number of your provinces, nor set fire to the suburbs of Constantinople. Why do you not punish the infidels who have done these things, instead of threatening us, who, by God’s mercy, are children of Christ? You are imitating the Jews, who set Barabbas free and put Jesus Christ to death.”

Notwithstanding the firmness and severity of this long letter the Pope declared himself willing that the inquiry should be reopened, in order, if not to please the Emperor, to take from him every excuse for the line of conduct he was pursuing. Then he continues :

“Let Ignatius and Photius come to Rome in person ; and if they cannot come, let them by letter state the reason, and send persons to represent them. Ignatius may send Anthony, Bishop of Cyzicus ; Basil, Bishop of Thessalonica ; Constantine, Bishop of Larissa ; Theodore, Bishop of Syracuse ; Metrophanes, Bishop of Smyrna ; and Paul, Bishop of Heracleia of Pontus.” He then names certain ecclesiastics of lower rank, and continues : “If you do not send them you render yourself suspect, for these are they who can put us in possession of the truth. Photius and Gregory of Syracuse can send whom they will, and your Majesty may send two members of your Court. We ask you also to return us the original letters which we sent by Zachary and Rodoaldus, that we may see whether they have been changed. Send us also the original Acts of the pretended Deposition of Ignatius, and those which have been entrusted to the Secretary, Leo.”

He concludes by exhorting the Emperor not to trespass on the rights of the Church, as the Church does not intrude on those of the State.

“Before Jesus Christ came there were kings who were also priests ; for example, Melchisadech. The Devil has imitated this in the pagan Emperors who were Sovereign Pontiffs as well ; but after the coming of Him Who is King and Priest, the Emperor no longer takes to himself the rights of the priest, nor the priest those of the Emperor. Jesus Christ has made the two powers separate, in such a way that Christian Emperors have need of the Pontiff for life eternal, and the Pontiffs avail

themselves of the laws of the State for the concerns of this world."

In an appended clause, the Pope wrote as follows :

"Whosoever shall read this letter to the Emperor and distort a clause of it is anathematised. Whosoever shall translate it, and change by adding to or taking from it, unless through ignorance or necessity of transposing, he, too, is anathematised."

The effect of this letter was what might have been anticipated by those who knew the pride and obstinacy of the Emperor. If there had been any restraint or reticence up to this time in his correspondence with Pope Nicholas, he now forgot it all, and entered on a coarse insolence unequalled in the historical documents of that period. He attacked the personal character of the Pope; he made light of his authority and office; he repudiated his claim to the primacy of the Church; he proclaimed his own superiority, ranking the secular above the spiritual power; and affirmed his contempt for religion which could not bend and yield, and put aside principle to meet the demands of an acute crisis. Since Rome would not bow to him, he would humble her to the dust.

The Pope's reply to this letter is worth quoting in full :

"I received last year," he wrote, "a letter bearing your name, filled with such insults and irreverences, that the writer of it would appear to have dipped his pen in the venom of the serpent. We cannot pass over such contempt for the dignity of our office, for which reason we advise you to

have this infamous letter publicly burnt, to purge yourself of the shame of having authorised it. Otherwise, take notice that in full Council of all the West we will anathematise the author of this letter, and then we will have it put on an iron plate and have a great fire lighted under the same, and so burn it, to your confusion, in presence of all the nations that come to the Tomb of St. Peter."

Hotter and hotter waxed the dispute, until the Pope, thinking that he might by indirect means bring about a result which he had failed to attain by direct appeals to the Emperor, determined to address himself again to the secular and ecclesiastical powers of the East, with a view to strengthening the supporters of Ignatius, and to detaching from Photius such priests and laymen as had taken his side in this unfortunate dispute.

Accordingly, he wrote many letters. The first to which we shall have occasion more particularly to refer, was a very long one addressed to the clergy of Constantinople and to the Bishops subject to that See; in which he gave an account in detail of the deposition and substitution, and set forth the six articles of the decree of the Council of Rome against Photius. He inveighed against the elevation of laymen to the Episcopacy. "Iniquity has raised her head so high that, in contempt of the Canons, laymen now govern the Church, and according to their whims take away the Bishops and put others in their places, whom they depose in turn. For, wishing to do their criminal work with impunity, they will not allow

bishops to be taken from among well-disciplined clerics lest they should reprove their vices, but choose them from another class, that they may make light of them. Whence it happens that outsiders gather the fruit due to the labours of ecclesiastics, and it is of no account to have passed through the steps of the ministry, and spent one's life in the service of God, for another comes from without to take up every prominent position."

The Pope cites against the abuse of raising laymen abruptly to the Episcopacy the thirteenth Canon of the Council of Sardica.

In a second letter, addressed to all Patriarchs, Metropolitans, and Bishops, and to all in communion with the Holy See, Nicholas repeated the substance of the above encyclical, and added many documents to it, *e.g.*, the two letters of September 25th, 860, carried to the East by the legates Rodoaldus and Zachary; the address of the Pope to all the Faithful, dated March 18th, 862; the two letters sent to the East in reply to those brought to Rome by Leo; the decree of the Council held in Rome in 863; and some other minor records bearing on the matter.

He wrote at this time a letter to Photius, exhorting him to retire from his false position; and a letter to Bardas Cæsar, beseeching him to put an end to the Schism.

He wrote a touching letter to Ignatius, to console him in his trials and cheer him, telling him all that he was doing to relieve him. He also wrote to the Empress mother, Theodora, to praise her for her constancy, and give her hope and comfort

in her abandonment ; to Eudoxia, wife of Michael, in which he encourages her to take the side of Ignatius ; and to the Orthodox senators to the same purpose.

Nicholas died shortly after, having done what lay in his power to heal the evils whose consequences are felt to-day.

END OF VOL. I.



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